the Spartana

Issue 1 August 2022

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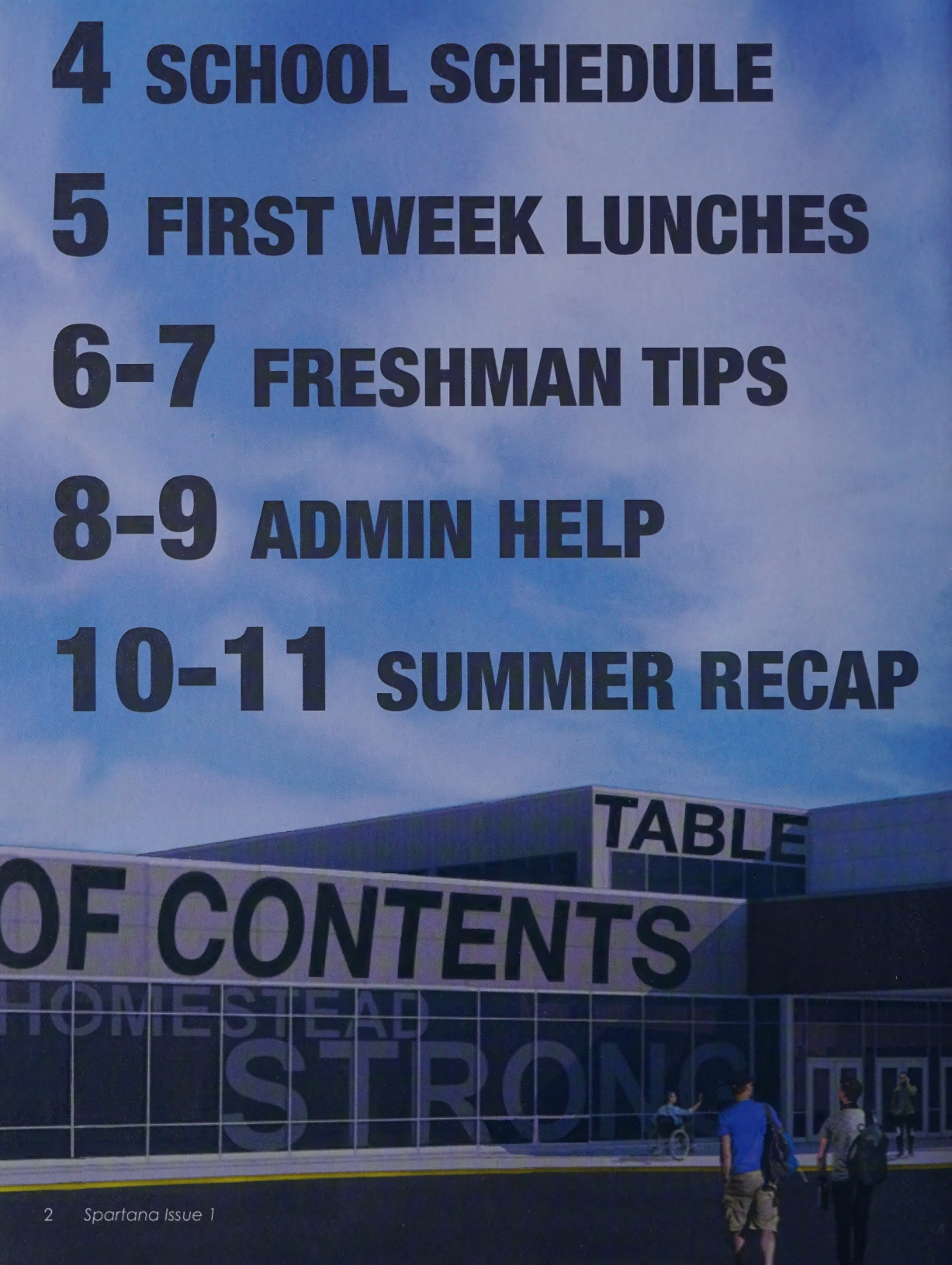


Dear Reader,

For the newcomers, we want to take a moment to introduce Homestead's monthly publication, the Spartana. Our job is to inform and entertain the Homestead student body. We strive to cover issues relevant to you in a concise, accurate and fair manner. If at any point while you flip through the pages of this hallowed publication and find yourself wanting to write an article yourself, consider joining our staff. We are always in need of writers, especially those who are interested in reporting sports and news. The class counts as a fine arts credit and can help develop your skills in graphic design, writing and communication. If you want to contribute, but are unable due to schedule availability, the Spartana is also looking for guest writers. For any inquiry, whether question, comment, constructive criticism or praise, contact us at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com.

That said, we hope you savored your blissful three months of summer and are prepared for the onslaught of this academic year, filled as it will be with joys and disappointments alike. For those of you entering high school for the first time, don't crowd the hallways, don't use lockers and know what lunch you're going to. To learn more helpful tips on surviving freshman year (and the subsequent years), turn to pages 6 and 7. For those of you returning to the glory of high school, perhaps you need a refresher, in which case also turn to pages 6 and 7. Good luck Spartans, and welcome back.

See you next month,
Ganga Subramanian and Madeline Phuong

REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

1st Period 7:45 – 8:30
2nd Period 8:36 – 9:21
3rd Period 9:27 – 10:14
4th Period 10:20 – 11:05
5th Period 11:11 – 12:52
A Lunch.....11:05 - 11:32
Class.....11:37 - 12:52

Class.....11:11 - 11:32
B Lunch.....11:32 - 11:59
Class.....12:04 - 12:52

Class.....11:11 - 11:59
C Lunch.....11:59 - 12:26
Class.....12:31 - 12:52

Class.....11:11 - 12:26
D Lunch.....12:26 - 12:52
6th Period 12:58 – 1:43
7th Period 1:49 – 2:35

There are an extra 21 minutes in 5th period. This is the perfect time to start homework or ask for help! Teachers can answer your questions and give you helpful resources during this time.

TWO HOUR DELAY (SCHEDULE A)

1st Period 9:45 – 10:11
2nd Period 10:17 – 10:43
3rd Period 10:49 – 11:15
4th Period 11:21 – 1:02
A Lunch.....11:15 - 11:42
Class.....11:47 - 1:02

Class.....11:21 - 11:42
B Lunch.....11:42 - 12:09
Class.....12:14 - 1:02

Class.....11:21 - 12:09
C Lunch.....12:09 - 12:36
Class.....12:41 - 1:02

Class.....11:21 - 12:36
D Lunch.....12:36 - 1:02
5th Period 1:08 – 1:33
6th Period 1:39 – 2:04
7th Period 2:10 – 2:35

LUNCH MENU

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Italian	Sausage Pizza	Pepperoni Pizza	Cheese Pizza
Mexican	Nachos	Tacos	Nachos
Sub/Salad	Sub/Salad	Sub/Salad	Sub/Salad
A & B Lines	Cheese Pizza Wedge	Chicken Nuggets	Quesadilla
		Mashed Potatoes	Hamburger/ Cheeseburger
	Chicken Patty/ Spicy Sandwich	Hot Pocket	
Veggie	Green Beans	Steamed Corn	Refried/Baked Beans
Canned Fruit	Fruit Cocktail	Mandarin Oranges	Peaches
Fresh Fruit	Golden Apples	Bananas	Red Apples

How does lunch work?

The cafeteria has TV monitors listing the daily menu for each lunch line. After falling in line, pick up your food and enter your 7 digit school ID number to check out. See above for the daily menus of all lunch lines during the first week of school!

designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

FRESHMAN SURVIVAL GUIDE

written and designed by
HANNAH SHAW

Starting the school year can be nerve-wracking for anyone, especially for students who are entirely new to the school. Entering freshman year is accompanied by challenges unique to that grade, but you don't have to go through it alone.

GET INVOLVED

I'm sure you've heard this a thousand times from a thousand different people, but it really is good advice. High school doesn't have to just be going to classes and doing homework. With the amount of clubs Homestead has, there is something for everyone. Participating in school events, activities, and clubs is a great way to broaden your social circle and discover new things. See the Activities page on the Homestead website for a list of school clubs.

GET CERTAIN CLASSES OUT OF THE WAY

Classes like health, personal finance and gym are best to take in your second or first year of school to get them out of the way. They're required credits and therefore unavoidable, but taking them sooner rather than later gives you more freedom in scheduling later down the line.

ASK QUESTIONS

If you are confused in a class, the best thing you can do for yourself is to ask questions. As simple as it sounds, many high school students seem to forget that their teachers are there to help them learn. A teacher will never get mad at you for not understanding something right away, so don't be afraid to ask.

WORK HARD

Another seemingly obvious piece of advice is to put your best foot forward as you start your first year of high school. Trying your hardest in your classes now will set you up for success in more challenging classes. It will also help you learn what studying techniques work best for you, which can be applied throughout the rest of high school.

DON'T OVEREXERT YOURSELF

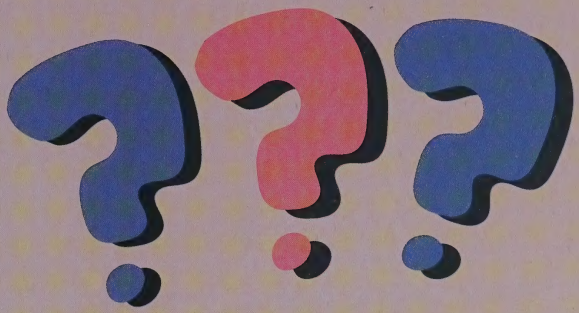
You shouldn't expect yourself to be doing everything, especially not in freshman year. While taking harder classes will be beneficial to you, overworking yourself to achieve impossible goals is worse than letting some of those goals go. Make high school worth your while, not just in education, but also in experiences. Have fun!

Images courtesy of Hannah Shaw

QUESTIONS FROM (FORMER) FRESHMEN

WHAT IF I GET LOST?

A common concern amongst freshmen is not being able to find their way around the many halls of Homestead. The size of the school on top of the construction can make the school a confusing landscape for those not accustomed to the building. "My only concern was how big that school is," Kia Reeder (10) said. Though intimidating from the outside, Homestead is set up in blocks of classrooms, such as the 100s, 900s, 400s, and so on. Understanding where these sections are in the school can eliminate some of this stress. If knowing that is still not enough, maps are located on the wall of almost every hallway and teachers will be happy to help you find your class; all you have to do is ask.



HOW DO I STAY ON TOP OF HOMEWORK?

The workload of high school can seem overwhelming to those who have never had to attend seven classes a day. "I was worried about not being able to balance dance and my homework," Madilyn McDonald (10) said. While not everyone will be participating in the same sports or afterschool activities, managing studying and homework is still important. When it comes to keeping up with your work, Canvas and a personal planner can be a huge help. Having a place to write down your upcoming assignments and tests will help you plan out your study schedule. Most teachers will have the assignments, tests, and quizzes on the weekly calendar which can assist those who struggle with organization.

WHAT IF I DON'T LIKE MY CLASSES?

Antonello Cantasano (10) expressed her concern that she would "regret (her) choice of classes" prior to starting the new school year. While this is an understandable concern, there are also benefits to taking classes that may be out of your comfort zone. High school has considerably more variety in class options than middle school. This attribute makes it a perfect time to try new things and discover passions you may not have even considered to be possibilities.

If you're still worried, the good news is that it gets better. After a while you'll have gotten the hang of it and begun to understand the general flow of high school better. There is no reason to feel any outlandish amounts of stress over ninth grade. "It all works out in the end," said McDonald.

Need Acad

ISABE

Guidance and Counselors

Mrs. Rachel Bracey
10-12 Counselor
rbracey@sacs.k12.in.us

Mrs. Alyssa Braman
Frechman Counselor
abraman@sacs.k12.in.us

Mrs. Mallory Cochran
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Mrs. Lyla Dean
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Mrs. Jennifer Edwards
10-12 Counselor
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Ms. Amy Hamilton
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Mrs. Kara Klinker
10-12 Counselor
kklinker@sacs.k12.in.us

Ms. Jameshia Wynn
10-12 Counselor
jwynn@sacs.k12.in.us

Tutoring and Help

Classroom Teacher Support: If you need academic help, don't be afraid to ask your teacher or seminar/study hall teachers! Every teacher is willing to help.

Peer/Student Math tutors: See your math teacher for a list of student tutors and contact information. For additional help, contact the AskRose science and math helpline at 1-877-275-7673. Khan Academy is also a useful resource.

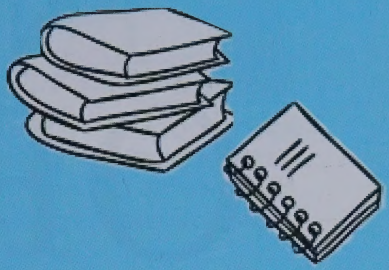
World Language Tutoring: See your world language teacher for a contact list of peer tutors in all languages!

Math Resource Room Zoom Link: Available every day periods 1-7. See your math teacher's Canvas page for the Math Resource Room Zoom link.

mic Help?

ROSE

Admin Staff



Mrs. Susan Summers
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Mrs. Jennifer Bay
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Mr. Stephen Clark
Assistant Principal
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Mr. Chris Johnson
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Mr. Jeff Kintz
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Ms. Lindsay Lackland
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Mr. Scott Zvers
Assistant Principal
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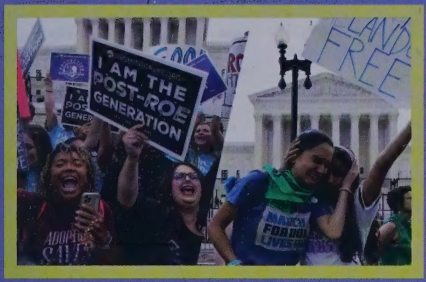
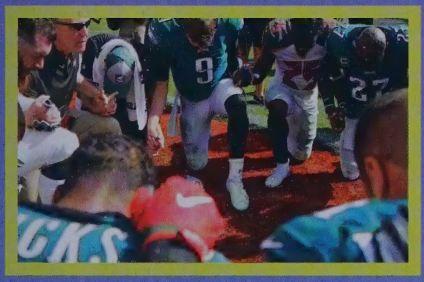
NEWS OF THE SUMMER

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT



JUNE 24: The decision by the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade* sparked both celebration and protest across the nation.

Photos by Jose Luis Magana/AP Photo and Anna Moneymaker/GettyImages



JUNE 27: In *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Joseph Kennedy, a high school football coach who was fired for praying with his team on the field after games.

Photo by FOX 31

JULY 4: Joey Chestnut devoured 63 hotdogs and buns in just ten minutes to win the 2022 Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest, marking his fifteenth career win.

Photo by GettyImages

JULY 8: Shinzo Abe, Japan's longest-serving former Prime Minister, was assassinated at 67 years old while speaking in Nara, Japan.

Photo by GettyImages

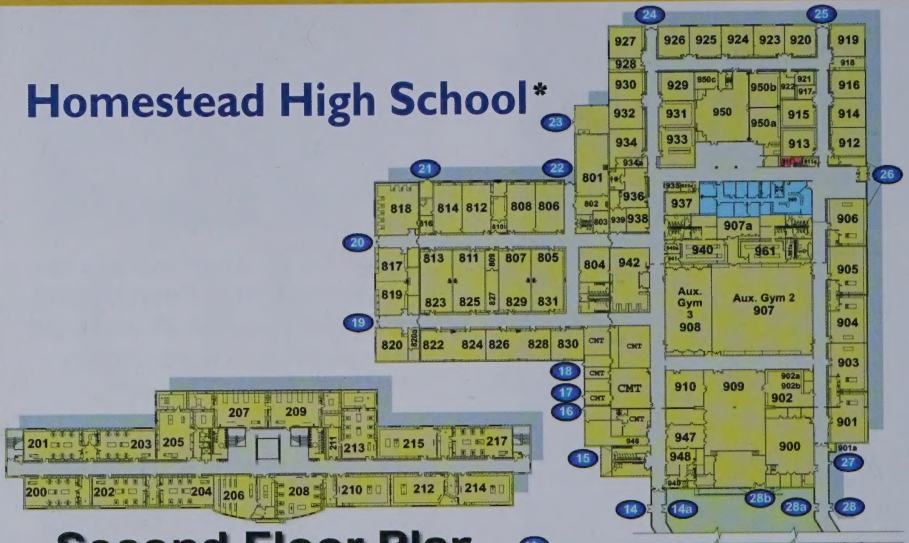
JULY 12: Twitter responded with legal action to Elon Musk's termination of the $44 billion purchase agreement.

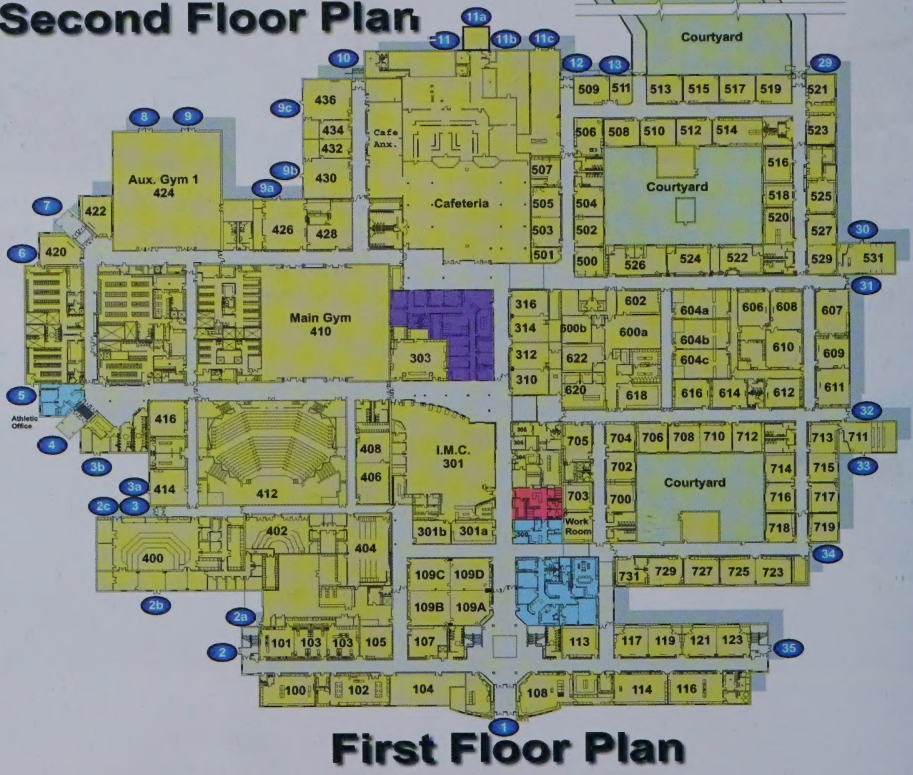
Photo by CNN

Homestead's new entrance and parking lot on the west side of the building is now complete. The rest of the construtions project, including the addition of 400,000 square feet of renovated space is set to be finished in December of 2024.

Photo by CSO

Homestead High School*





First Floor Plan

* Map may be inaccurate. Changes have occurred due to construction.

Check out our past issues at hhsspartana.com!

the Spartana

Issue 2 September 2022

Homestead Spartans prepare for postsecondary goals and uncertainty. Find out more on pp. 16-19.

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Important information regarding the newest outbreak of monkeypox.

LEDITOR

Dear Reader,

This September, we say goodbye to the blistering heat of long August days and welcome fall breezes, chilly mornings and daily routines. Similarly, we say goodbye to a Spartana dominated by editorials while comfortably settling into an evolved version of the Spartana dedicated to serving its community.

In tandem, the theme of this issue is change: from the new teachers that are acclimating to Homestead's environment, to a transformation in the college admissions process, then to a new school policy on vapes, construction updates and the addition of a paywall on a beloved study website. Homestead High School is in a state of constant evolution and the Spartana is its dutiful record keeper.

Enraptured by these sacred pages? If so, consider joining our evolving staff. As we expand, we are in need of writers willing to provide content for our website at hhsspartana.com. In the unfortunate situation that you are engrossed by the Spartana but are unable to join the class due to schedule unavailability, the Spartana is always on the prowl for guest writers. For any inquiry, whether question, comment, constructive criticism or praise, contact us at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com.

As always Spartans, good luck and see you next month.

Ganga Subramanian & Madeline Phuong

UGLIEST PET CONTEST

Send us a picture of your pet and their name to hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com for a chance for your pet to be featured in a future issue and on the Spartana website (hhsspartana.com)!

COVER BY MADELINE PHUONG
TABLE OF CONTENTS BY GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

MEET THE SPARTANA STAFF

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

CATHERINE CRUPI (ADVISOR)

Ms. Crupi is excited to have the opportunity to be the newspaper advisor and is enjoying working with the editors and staff.

1 SAM COLE

Taking inspiration from his experience with the drums, Sam plans to write about music for his second year as a staff member. He admires artists and bands such as Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath and Jim Croce. In school, he is excited to learn about the design process in his Introduction to Engineering Design class.

2 GAIA SPLENDORE

For her second year on staff, Gaia will focus on pop culture. In addition, she has a love for reading and writing, especially when considering the "power that they have over us and how we influence them." Her favorite short stories are by Kurt Vonnegut and George Saunders. In her free time, she can be found reading under a tree in Swinney Park.

3 AZALEA ORSINI

New to the staff, Lea will write about geopolitics, as well as "the comedy and satire of American politics." Her favorite topics of discussion are history and the design, software and user interface of Apple products. Also, ever since her participation in a 3rd-grade production of "Mary Poppins," she is capable of doing nearly any accent.

4 YEVVA IRELAND

Yevva plans to cover informational topics in her first year on the staff. Her favorite subject is math, and she especially likes geometry, as it is less imaginary than algebra. She is excited to venture into journalism and believes it to be a good opportunity for college. In addition, her favorite colors are blue and black.

5 ALESSIA PASSONI

As a second-year staff member, Alessia plans to write about news and sports this year, as well as spontaneous topics of interest. Outside of school, she loves basking in the sun and being in the natural world. She also takes walks around her neighborhood and babysits in her free time.

6 THOMAS HILL

Thomas is excited to write about politics and current events for his second-and-a-half year as a staff member. In school, he looks forward to English and history. A frequent reader, he most enjoys the genre of high fantasy, which includes "The Lord of the Rings" and "The Chronicles of Narnia."

7 LUKE LAND

Having been on the staff for three years, Luke will continue his journalistic career in covering notable sports figures and events. In addition to playing basketball, he also listens to hip-hop and rap music in his free time, with some of his favorite artists being Drake and Lil Baby.

8 KAIYA CRONKHITE

As a third-year staff member, Kaiya will be covering school events, sports and clubs this year. In the classroom, she loves learning about the health sciences and gaining a deeper understanding of how and why things work. She also plays softball, which she values for both the competition and the cooperation that it inspires.

9 ISABELLA AMBROSE

For her second year on the staff, Isabella looks forward to writing news stories. While she enjoys reading classic works in her English class, she spends her free time dancing on the Homestead Dance Team and at the Premiere Dance Company. One of her favorite TV shows is "The Great British Baking Show" since she loves to bake at home.

10 HANNAH SHAW

Hannah will be concentrating on school and community events during her second year as a staff member. In the classroom, she is interested in calculus. She does blast boxing as a hobby. She is also excited to volunteer at Erin's House for Grieving Children, where she values "being able to help the kids through a difficult time in their life."

11 MELODY THRASHER

A second-year staff member, Melody plans to spotlight local small businesses. She takes an interest in psychology—specifically the concept of neuroplasticity—and wants "to learn about why people act the way they do." She has played guitar since the age of 10, and her favorite song is "Drown" by The Smashing Pumpkins.

12 STELLA GRABLE

For her first year as a staff member, Stella will take a look into the history and current events of the music industry "to encompass and link present and past." She is interested in English and takes part in activities such as Poetry Out Loud. Outside of the classroom, she can be found thrifting for statement pieces with friends.

13 ELAINA SCHILT

For her second year on staff, Elaina plans to write articles on news and school-related events. Having played tennis for five years, she looks forward to the fun memories she will create with teammates during tennis season in the spring. In addition, she likes to draw, play rock music on her guitar and play table tennis in her free time.

14 PEYTON HOFFER

Peyton looks forward to covering the intersection between politics and history during his first year on the staff. He particularly enjoys English and United States history, and he takes an interest in Marxism during the Russian Revolution. In addition, he plays baseball in his free time.

15 JULIA GAYER

Julia will dive into abstract and philosophical topics in her first-and-a-half year on the staff. In addition to being president of Homestead's Philosophy Club, she does everything from radio to fashion design. She especially appreciates '70's to '90's fashion, which she sees as "futuristic yet from a bygone era."

16 KATELYN STYBORSKI

Having been on the staff for three years, Katelyn will cover the Homestead English department and school events in her writing. She also likes to draw, taking inspiration from creators on Instagram and Pinterest. Outside of school, she can be found in one of her favorite spots: the Aboite branch of the Allen County Public Library.

17 MADELINE PHUONG

Madeline looks forward to writing news and profile pieces for her third year on the staff. She loves the visual arts—painting in particular—and is learning ceramics as well. This year, she is enthusiastic about helping run Homestead's Art Club and competing in Congressional Debate. Outside of school, she can be found enjoying the outdoors.

18 ELENA MORENO

As a new staff member, Elena looks forward to developing her journalism and writing skills in covering a variety of topics. She loves doing hands-on work in her robotics and engineering class, and she hopes to make it to the state robotics competition again with the Homestead Robotics Club. In her free time, she visits Fox Island to swim.

19 KAITLYN FRY

New to the staff, Kaitlyn plans to explore the potential evidence behind mythical creatures such as mermaids, aliens, and Bigfoot this year. Her favorite subject is earth and space science, and she has an interest in astrology. In her free time, she can be found reading or watching TV.

20 CLAIRE HOUSER

For her first year on the staff, Claire is eager to share a comic—containing museum robbery and secret organizations—that she developed with a friend. Other than art and graphic design, she loves to play clarinet, and she is part of the Homestead marching band. One of her favorite video games is "The Legend of Zelda."

21 GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

As a third-year staff member, Ganga anticipates the April Fool's satire issue as the most fun of the year. She is taking a language and a screenwriting course in addition to Newspaper. Her talents include playing three instruments (saxophone, oboe and piano) and whistling "The Good, The Bad And The Ugly" theme song.

SPARTAN SPOTLIGHTS: THREE VOYAGES

written by
MELODY THRASHER & STELLA GRABLE
designed by
MELODY THRASHER

KATIE HEILMAN

From 2019 to 2021 Junior Katie Heilman and her family lived in Mexico before returning to the United States. This past summer, Heilman returned to the cities of Saltillo and Mazatlan with the intention of visiting family friends.

During their two week stay, Heilman and her family returned to their favorite spots, predominantly spending time on the seaside. Heilman described her most memorable moment during one of these escapades: getting stung by a jellyfish. Although this encounter was far from pleasant, Heilman recited it with an air of humor.

Due to her previous experience with the area, Heilman outlined that her trip was different from average tourists. Primarily, she did not go sightseeing. However, she does recommend researching sites and landmarks of interest when first visiting the area. Heilman agrees that a simple beach trip isn't so bad either.

Additionally, Heilman recounted that she did not experience as much culture shock as one might expect. Her language barrier was miniscule compared to the average tourist, although she could see how it could present itself as a problem for people who have never been to the area before. When in an area with an unfamiliar language, Heilman recommends that one immerse themselves as much as possible. In addition, consider enunciation, speed and patience.

Heilman stated that, in her opinion, Mexico differs from the U.S. in two distinct ways: meal times and road systems. Traditionally, breakfast in Mexico is eaten much earlier at around 6:00 am. Lunch is typically eaten later at about 3:00 pm, and dinner can be eaten as late as 9:00 pm. In regards to meal times, Heilman says that it takes some getting used to, but that the food of Central America makes up for it, proclaiming her family friends' tacos as the highlight of her trip. She described the road systems as a greater difference, stating that, "traffic signals are just suggestions." Although she retained her license, Heilman's family refused to let her drive on the unruly roads of Mexico during their trip.

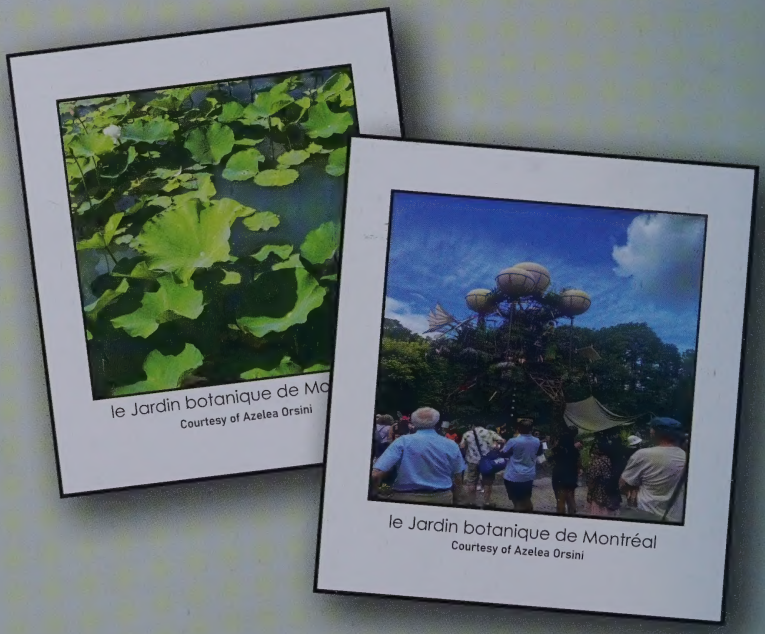
Despite the confusing traffic dilemmas, Heilman says that overall the trip was a great experience. She recommends visiting the area multiple times, if possible, as she believes that her trip after knowing the area was much better.

AZELEA ORSINI

This past summer sophomore Lea Orsini traveled to Montreal, Quebec in Canada. She and her family first drove seven hours to Niagra Falls; then, after staying for a few days, drove three more hours to Quebec.

Immediately after arriving at her Airbnb, Orsini immediately had her first obstacle with the language barrier. She recounted that the cleaning lady didn't speak "an ounce" of English, and when Orsini used her minor conversational French skills to ask how many beds were in their room, the cleaning lady dove into a lengthy answer that was obviously intended for a native speaker. The experience was especially difficult due to the thick Québécois accent of the area. Orsini reflected on the moment with a simple, "It was funny— until it wasn't."

Another, perhaps less anticipated, cultural phenomenon that Orsini encountered was the description of lemonade in the area. Traditionally, in France, the word "Limonade" is used to describe a lemon soda. However, in the context of Québécois French, "Limonade" is used to describe American lemonade, a subject



le Jardin botanique de Mo
Courtesy of Azelea Orsini

le Jardin botanique de Montréal
Courtesy of Azelea Orsini

that has an entirely different word in traditional French.

Orsini has a ritual of judging every restaurant based on the quality of its lemonade, so this "jumble," as she described it, was quite prevalent for her personally, yet she continued to get lemonade every time.

A less jarring cultural difference that Orsini noticed was how accessible the city was to English speaking tourists. As a popular tourist location, she described how things such as bathrooms and signs were often labeled in French and English, an addition which she found to be immensely helpful. So, although the language barrier may be an issue in some areas, specifically hotels and lemonade, Quebec is highly accomodating to English speakers.

When asked what her most memorable moment of the trip was, Orsini fondly recounted the story of meeting a small child. After being picked up by her mother, the young child dropped her toy turtle, which Orsini then returned. The child responded happily with a small "Merci," which Orsini found to be incredibly endearing.

Although Orsini says she did not exactly meet any new people during her stay in Quebec, she says that small interactions of this type made her trip.

Orsini recommends that if you visit Quebec, make sure to see the Montreal Botanical Gardens, especially the lilypad exhibit. In addition, she suggests you eat some surprisingly good pasta, specifically from a small rigatoni shop if you can. Overall, despite her cultural struggles, Orsini says that she personally would return to the area again. However, she only recommends you visit the location if you know at least some French, stating "if you don't know French, you're going to be very confused."

MEREDITH LONEY

Through Homestead High School's Travel Club, Meredith Loney (12) traveled to the beautiful country of Italy to embark on a 10 day journey with a group of 40 people. The group traveled on two flights, first landing in Germany. Although they were only in the German airport for a layover, they were still able to try tasty German food.

When they arrived in Italy, there were many things to explore: culture, cuisine and geography. Some cultural differences Loney noted were in relation to food and restaurants. The group "actually looked some of [the cultural differences] up because the waiters kept laughing." Asking for olive oil or vinaigrette during dinner was something very uncommon, and it's expected to eat the bread on the table with the meal, not beforehand.

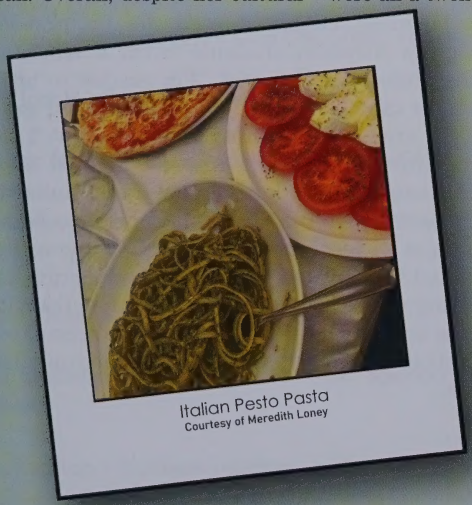
Speaking of food, the best dish that Loney had on this trip was pesto pasta. People from the group also said the seafood was amazing, especially the mussels.

Loney expressed that most of the time the group stayed together, but there were chances for exploration in smaller groups. While they were in Sorrento, a coastal town in southwestern Italy, they were all a twenty minute walk from the beach. Because of this, Meredith and a few of her friends were able to go night swimming in the Mediterranean Sea—one of the most memorable moments of the trip.

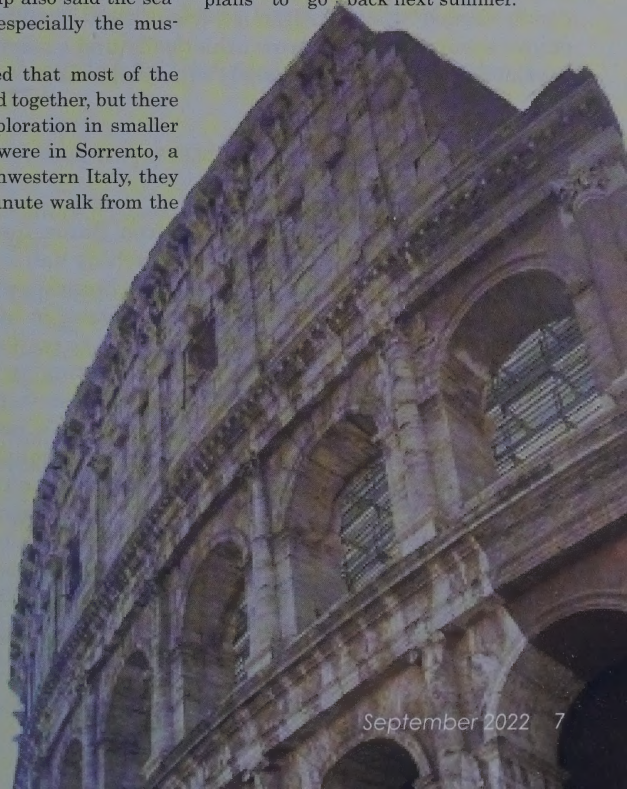
The funniest moment Loney had on this trip was when Nancy Bogdonanwicz, head of Homestead's Travel Club, sent her location out to the students to come join her, but did not specify what was happening. They all ended up in the city square dancing with a group of British people for about half an hour—something the students hadn't picture themselves doing previously.

When it came to exploring Italy's geography and landmarks, there were many amazing sites to see. "I think the best place we went to was Capri," Loney said. They were able to take a boat tour around the island to see all of the beautiful rock formations. On the island, there were many brightly colored buildings and neat patterns dispersed throughout the architecture. In addition to Capri, the Colosseum was an added scenic destination.

Overall, the trip was a great experience for Loney and the rest of the group. With amazing food, beautiful geography and experiences of a lifetime, the group thoroughly enjoyed visiting Italy. Loney plans to go back next summer.



Italian Pesto Pasta
Courtesy of Meredith Loney

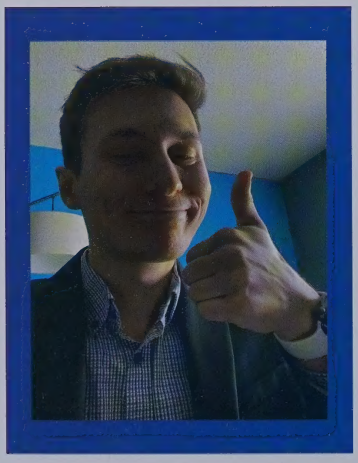


New Teachers

written and designed by
PEYTON HOFFER

This year, there are 14 new teachers at Homestead. Many of these teachers already have experience teaching and helping students in other schools. The new staff is beginning to settle in thanks to the help of the students and fellow staff members. Some of these new staff share their goals and interests?

Robert Irwin has worked at five different schools for a collective 30 years, making him one of the most qualified people for the job of athletic director. Irwin has held several positions throughout his career, such as head basketball coach, JV basketball coach, athletic director, elementary school teacher and gym teacher. While experienced, some challenges come with each job. "In [his] position balancing time at school and time at home [can be difficult]" he said. "The hours can be very long for several days in a row." Irwin likes to spend the time he has at home "hanging out with [his] family and playing with [his] grandchildren," which includes his black labradoodle named Murphy. Although Irwin is an administrator, he still enjoys seeing students "grow athletically and academically," which is something he finds "extremely satisfying" about his job.



Jacob Dunn, the new business teacher, is ready for his first year of teaching and is excited to introduce students to the business world. "I am brand new to the profession," he said. "I'm excited to bring my experiences in business to the classroom." As a Homestead graduate himself, he worked in the area before coming back to teach: "I worked in marketing at a company here in town, where I learned all about the business world." Although Dunn didn't follow the standard path of becoming a teacher, his unique outlook on his subject could benefit students learning from him. "I teach because I really value education. I don't have the traditional background of going into education as a career. I went into marketing worked there for a bit and then transitioned to teaching." Dunn leads an "active lifestyle" outside of school, playing sports like ultimate frisbee and volleyball and going for runs. He also plays guitar on the side.

Jennifer Burkholder is a new math teacher this year and is settling into her first teaching position, but not without struggle. "The hardest thing about being a teacher a lot of times is getting the students involved and interested," she said. "Finding a way to keep students engaged while still learning the material can be tricky." Burkholder, while new, isn't inexperienced. "This is my first year out of college," she said. "I did my student teaching at Eastbrook High School in Marion and graduated from Anderson University." Outside of school, Burkholder enjoys playing volleyball at her church and spending time with her husband and dog (a black lab named Koa!). While Burkholder and all other teachers tackle problems in the classroom differently, one thing remains the same among them all: the greatest reward a teacher can have is the satisfaction attained through giving. Burkholder said, "I loved being able to help give students that moment of clarity, that "ah-ha" moment is something really amazing."

New Teachers/Certified Staff

Acree, Amy - Media Specialist

Bartel, Camille - Spanish Teacher

Behrendt, Sarah - English/Yearbook

Burkholder, Jennifer - Math Teacher

Busch, Melanie - PE/Health Teacher

Clemons, Shane - Social Studies Teacher

Conley, Kristan - Intense Intervention Teacher

DeHerrera, Anthony (TJ) - Mild Disabilites Teacher

Dunn, Jacob - Business Teacher

Heckber, Kristen - Guidance Consuler for eSACS

Hennessey, Ashley - Family & Consumer Sciences Teacher

Robbins, Jakayla - Math Teacher

Wiley, Stephanie - Family & Consumer Sciences Teacher

Zvers, Jackson - Business Teacher

New Admin/Support Staff/LTA

Irwin, Robert - Athletic Director

Arnold, Jamie - Athletic Department Administrative Assistant

Bowen, Sarah - Special Needs Instructional Assistant

Brown, Brianne - Special Needs Instructional Assistant

Carrel, Gretchen - Attendance Secretary & Spartam Help Desk

Dahouk, Amal - Mild Disabilities Instructional Assistant

Fortune, Yolanda - Media Center/Student Testing Support

Gaff, Hidi - Seminar Assistant

Grinslade, Pamela - Mild Disabilities Instructional Assistant

Neuenschwander, Lisa - Special Needs Instructional Assistant

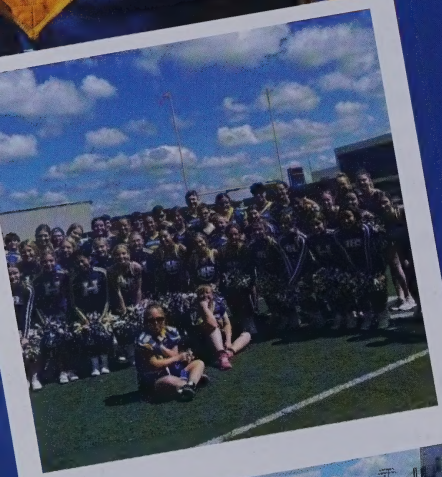
Todd, Rebecca - Assistant Registar

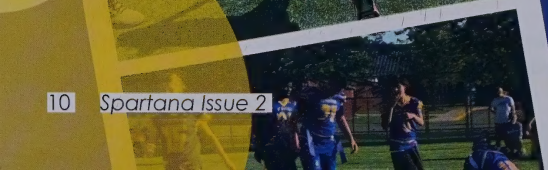
Batt, Erin - Math Teacher (Ali Meyers 2022-23 School Year)

Mast, Kristen - Guidence Counselor (Mallory Cochran's Maternity Leave)

UNIFIED FLAG

written and designed by
ALESSIA PASSONI





There are many ways to get involved at Homestead High School through sports, clubs and associations, which include Unified Flag Football. In this sport, athletes and partners work together to play football as well as make powerful friendships and accomplishments. Both the athletes and the player can learn a lot from each other. Not only do they get the opportunity to play a sport they love, but they get to do it with supportive friends and teammates by their side. Students get to feel involved and be a part of something bigger than just a sport. They get to learn and grow as individuals.

Lots of hard work is necessary for their season. Practices consist of conditioning, drills and reviewing plays. Practices are about an hour long each night and require lots of effort.Working on the fundamentals of the game not only gets them ready mentally but physically too.

They face many teams in their regular season. Carroll High School is Homestead's top competitor this year. With lots of teamwork and consistency, the Homestead team hopes to win against them.

The game functions as a five-on-five game with a mix of students with disabilities and without disabilities. It functions just as a normal game of flag football would, except for rules to make sure people of all abilities are included. It is highly competitive and fast paced with many amazing moments along the way.

Unified Flag Football became a part of the Champions Together program in 2018. The first Unified Flag Football track and field event started in 2013 and continues to grow. Homestead has adopted the Unified programs for about 4 years now and the partnership continues to expand.

Derek Nichols, coach and mentor of this program, has many goals for this season. He explains how he got involved with this pro-

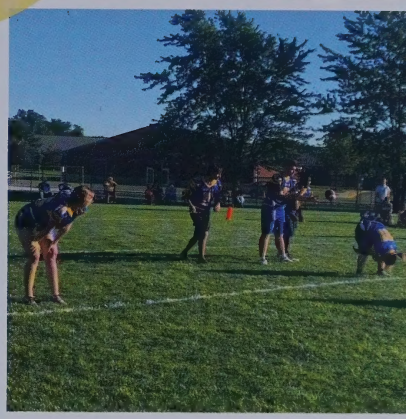
OOTBALL

gram: "I came to Homestead as a new teacher four years ago and Homestead was trying to start the first Unified Football program at the school. I was approached by the athletic director at the time, and I saw it as an opportunity to meet more students and get involved in athletics."

Additionally, Nichols mentions,"We strive to build relationships that last longer than the two-month season. The combination of students with disabilities and students without disabilities does not always happen naturally. Both can really learn a lot from each other and we try to foster these relationships while playing a competitive sport. Truly, we want our students without disabilities to realize that they are a part of something larger than themselves and that friendships can look differently than what they are used to."

Sophomore Mia Welker loves playing Unified Football, as she gets to be with Taylor Ruggles (11) and all her teammates and score touchdowns. Welker plays all the Unified Sports. Her favorite thing about Unified Football is being able to "run the play called Homestead where [she] get[s] to take the ball and score a touchdown". Additionally, she said, "I loves being with Taylor." Her favorite memory by far is "when [she] scored a touchdown!

Ruggles has done Unified Sports for two years now. She met Welker during Unified Track. She gets to be Welker's partner and encourages her along the way. Ruggles' favorite aspect of Unified Flag football is "getting to see Mia everyday." She has built a wonderful relationship with Welker as the two of the have gotten closer. This sport has not only allowed for them to win games and enhance their capabilities in football, but has developed a wonderful friendship that will last forever.



IN Graduation Pathways

written and designed by
ISABELLA AMBROSE

For the last few years, Homestead High School students have been required to complete Graduation Pathways, a module implemented by Indiana's Board of Education. Fifth period teachers are supposed to designate approximately ten minutes from their class for students to complete these modules. During this time, students complete an assortment of personality tests, reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and contemplate their goals for the future.

Flora Jones, Indiana Department of Education Director of Student Pathways & Opportunities, and Elise Locke, Assistant Director of Student Pathways, addressed the purpose of Graduation Pathways, its goals and how it affects students. Graduation Pathways seeks to answer one simple question: how are students being prepared for life after high school in school? Jones stated that the goal of Graduation Pathways is to "offer students opportunities to explore, engage, and experience... opportunities and their strengths." Jones stressed that in the past, school was not personalized enough for students.

"No one had ever given me the inventory to align with my interests," Jones said. "I went to college... and after my first year I changed my major." Jones felt that if she "had these opportunities and experiences that students will have now with Graduation Pathways, I would have known this is where I want to be." Elise Locke elaborated on this, saying that "one test wasn't meeting the needs of all the students." Students needed more ways to be able to express themselves at school that helped them better prepare themselves for the future.

Graduation Pathways is all about "changing the way students do school" because it encourages taking courses that are of interest to the student. One of the main goals of Graduation Pathways is to "eliminate summer melt," as Jones called it. Jones described summer melt as the period of time after high school and before college where students fall behind on their goals. Graduation Pathways aims to give students a better understanding of what they want to do after high school and to keep students focused on their goals.

But how exactly does Graduation Pathways prepare students for the future? Jones said that graduation pathways consists of three "buckets" or categories: diploma designations, employability skills and postsecondary-ready competencies.

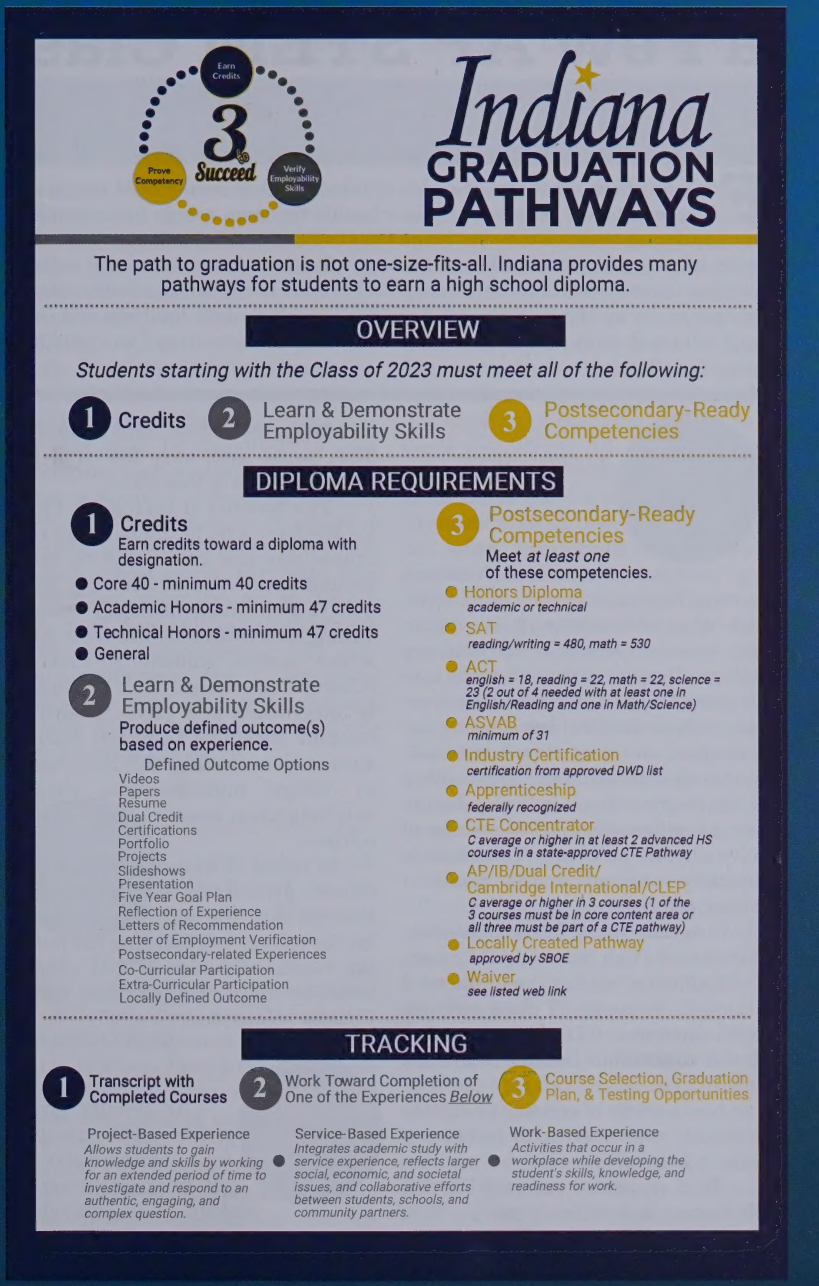
Diploma designations include graduation requirements in high school and the Core 40, Academic Honors, Technical Honors or General Diploma. Employability skills help prepare students for future employment opportunities. These include project-based, service-based and work-based learning skills. Postsecondary-ready competencies include the SAT, ACT and honors diploma. Additional information about each of these buckets can be found on the IDOE website.

Graduation Pathways is also being implemented on a middle school level. In middle school, Jones said that the goal of Graduation Pathways is to "engage [students] in activities that align with their values, their strengths, their interests."

Summed up, Graduation Pathways aims to "give students the opportunity to have a high wage, high demand job whether that's through enrollment, employment or enlistment leading to service.

Despite Graduation Pathways' goals, some students still feel that Graduation Pathways does not have a large impact on their life after high-school. Catherine Bilodeau, a class of 2022 graduate, said that "Graduation Pathways did not help me discover any new interests or talents." She stated that she was already interested in STEM-related fields before partaking in Graduation Pathways, and she recalled "little to no tools that pushed [her] to further explore" her options after high school.

"I already knew far in advance that my path to after high school was to attend a university. Graduation Pathways did not sway my decision," Bilodeau said.

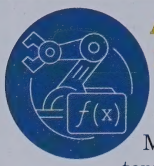

Earn Credits
3
Succeed
Prove Competency
Verify Employability Skills
Indiana
GRADUATION PATHWAYS
The path to graduation is not one-size-fits-all. Indiana provides many pathways for students to earn a high school diploma.
OVERVIEW
Students starting with the Class of 2023 must meet all of the following:
1 Credits
2 Learn & Demonstrate Employability Skills
3 Postsecondary-Ready Competencies
DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS
1 Credits
Earn credits toward a diploma with designation.
Core 40 - minimum 40 credits
Academic Honors - minimum 47 credits
Technical Honors - minimum 47 credits
General
2 Learn & Demonstrate Employability Skills
Produce defined outcome(s) based on experience.
Defined Outcome Options
Videos
Papers
Resume
Dual Credit
Certifications
Portfolio
Projects
Slideshows
Presentation
Five Year Goal Plan
Reflection of Experience
Letters of Recommendation
Letter of Employment Verification
Postsecondary-related Experiences
Co-Curricular Participation
Extra-Curricular Participation
Locally Defined Outcome
3 Postsecondary-Ready Competencies
Meet at least one of these competencies.
Honors Diploma
academic or technical
SAT
reading/writing = 480, math = 530
ACT
english = 18, reading = 22, math = 22, science = 23 (2 out of 4 needed with at least one in English/Reading and one in Math/Science)
ASVAB
minimum of 31
Industry Certification
certification from approved DWD list
Apprenticeship
federally recognized
CTE Concentrator
C average or higher in at least 2 advanced HS courses in a state-approved CTE Pathway
AP/IB/Dual Credit/ Cambridge International/CLEP
C average or higher in 3 courses (1 of the 3 courses must be in core content area or all three must be part of a CTE pathway)
Locally Created Pathway
approved by SBOE
Waiver
see listed web link
TRACKING
1 Transcript with Completed Courses
2 Work Toward Completion of One of the Experiences Below
3 Course Selection, Graduation Plan, & Testing Opportunities
Project-Based Experience
Allows students to gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question.
Service-Based Experience
Integrates academic study with service experience, reflects larger social, economic, and societal issues, and collaborative efforts between students, schools, and community partners.
Work-Based Experience
Activities that occur in a workplace while developing the student's skills, knowledge, and readiness for work.

Beyond High School: A Look Into a Few AP STEM Classes

Welcome, Students!

written and designed by
HANNAH SHAW

For many high schoolers, the idea of taking higher level STEM courses is daunting enough that adding Advanced Placement (AP) classes to their schedule becomes nearly inconceivable. However, the benefits of taking AP science and math courses may outweigh the challenges that accompany them. AP STEM classes are typically equivalent to an introductory level college class and will allow students to start college with plenty of additional knowledge regarding these topics. Having a strong background in math and science sets the stage for success in college as math and science make up the world around us. Skills such as data analysis and collection are perfected in AP STEM courses and will teach students how to better understand information like statistics, a skill that applies to aspects of life outside of academics.



AP Physics C: Mechanics

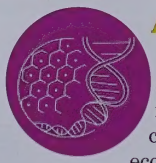
The seven units within AP Physics C: Mechanics focus on topics such as Newton's Laws of Motion, rotation, gravitation and other phenomena. It is equivalent to a one-semester introductory college physics course and leads into 18 majors and 66 different career areas, such as chemical engineering, architecture and dentistry. Additionally, this class hones in on various other skills, ranging from analyzing data to using mathematical relationships to solve physics problems. This class is typically centered around hands-on labs or activities.

In recent years, Mark Lenfestey, Homestead High School's AP Physics C: Mechanics teacher, has noticed a dramatic decrease in class size. In 2020, there were 63 students enrolled in this course, but in 2022, there are only 32. Though this change could be due to a variety of causes, Lenfestey is mainly concerned with increasing these numbers.

It is no secret that AP Physics Mechanics is a difficult course. This class was originally an honors physics class before becoming a first year advanced physics class. "I always tell my students that means it's going to be difficult so if it's not a big deal for them not to get a 4 or 5, then it could still be a good course" said Lenfestey. That being said, very few students earn D's or F's in this class.

The benefits of taking AP Physics Mechanics lie in the fact that this course provides students with background knowledge on concepts valuable to a multitude of college classes. Taking AP Physics Mecahnics in high school enables students to excel in other college courses that are heavily intertwined with physics, such as calculus. Although Lenfestey encourages students to take this class again in college, understanding physics will help them master other difficult courses.

In terms of who should take this course, prioritizing is important. A student with the end goal of preparing for college and learning the building blocks of future STEM classes would be the perfect candidate for AP Physics Mechanics.



AP Biology

AP Biology covers eight units ranging from biochemistry to cell communication to ecology. It is equivalent to a two semester introductory biology course at a university level. Lab work and hands-on group work is a key component of the class. Taking this course opens the door to 52 majors and 103 different career areas , including environmental engineering, psychiatry and medical studies post high school graduation.

But what can be expected from Homestead's AP Biology course?

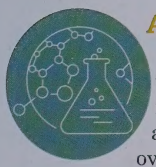
Naturally, the class revolves around studying biology, but students will also build upon skills that apply beyond the biological field. "We have math and we have some statistics, but I think it really focuses on critical thinking," said AP Biology teacher Christine Koehrn.

A majority of the class is spent working through problems with a small group, providing a more in-depth understanding of each topic. Group work may include designing and completing labs, working through assignments or analyzing given data. Koehrn believes that this style of study provides students with necessary skills for both the collegiate and professional experience later on.

"Even if you don't love every aspect of biology, we do a lot of stuff where you're thinking and you're looking at data or you're looking at models or you're looking at experiments, and you're trying to figure out what's going on and making the connections. I think that helps just in general with life," said Koehrn.

Although taking AP Biology has benefits relevant to every student, Koehrn emphasizes that anyone interested in going to college—especially those interested in any field of science—should consider this course. To those feeling nervous about taking this class, know that students statis-

tically do well. Over 80% of Homestead's AP Biology students received 4's and 5's on the 2022 exam, and students who turn in their work usually do not struggle to get good grades. "There are safety nets put in there so that you can stretch yourself," said Koehrn, who also described her classroom as a family in which no one feels alone.



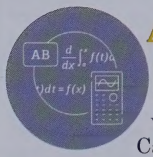
AP Chemistry

AP Chemistry takes the content learned in first-year chemistry and expands upon it over the course of nine units covering topics such as intermolecular forces and properties, chemical reactions and thermodynamics. This course is equivalent to a one-year introductory general chemistry course in college, which clears the path towards 48 majors and 84 career areas—ranging from nursing and pharmaceutical science to botany and animal sciences. It is centered around laboratory investigations and the application of chemical calculations.

"This class is most beneficial to anybody who is going to take a college level science course", said AP Chemistry teacher Rob Dillman. Specifically those looking to go into medicine, engineering or any field of science should consider taking AP Chemistry.

However, the benefits to taking AP Chemistry are extremely broad, as it provides building blocks for careers such as becoming a chef, an animal caretaker, a dentist or a lawyer. Dillman puts this best, saying "all of the interactions that you observe just by being in the world around us are all related to chemistry." Introducing advanced chemistry early on also introduces the processes that are fundamental to the surrounding world. Regardless of career path, AP Chemistry proves to be a valuable insight to how the world works, knowledge beneficial to any career.

Although AP Chemistry may be difficult, students should not shy away from challenging themselves academically. In fact, taking a class which pushes your academic limits may even be insightful to your strengths and weaknesses. "Sometimes a student is going to struggle with certain concepts, but it's good to identify your weaknesses when you're in high school so you can learn how to fix those when you get to the college level", said Dillman. Taking such a rigorous science course will pose some challenges, but facing these challenges head on now as opposed to later during college helps students stay ahead of the curve.



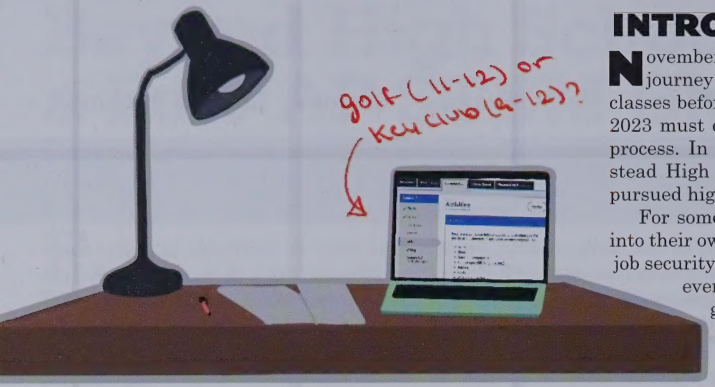
AP Calculus AB

AP Calculus AB is the first of two Advanced Placement Calculus courses. In AP Calculus AB, students cover topics such as limits and continuity, differentiation and integration throughout eight units. This course is equivalent to a first-semester college calculus course with a focus on differential and integral calculus. Taking this class opens the doors to 48 majors and 136 careers, including aerospace engineering, economics and research psychology. AP Calculus AB hones in on the basis of calculus and teaches students how to apply these theories to real world problems.

This course is particularly fascinating to those interested in understanding where this math comes from. "The focus on understanding the 'why' in Calculus is given more emphasis than it is at the college level", said AP Calculus AB and BC teacher Tisha Bowman. The extra attention to what makes calculus work leads to students retaining this knowledge for a longer period of time. Because calculus is ingrained in so many other studies, having a firm understanding of the topic creates students with strong futures, no matter what they decide to become.

Calculus has a reputation of being the hardest math class that a student can take. Although it is a difficult subject, Homestead's teachers put effort into making the experience as positive as possible. "I suggest taking homework assignments one day at a time. Just like any class, time management is key. I don't intend on assigning a ton of homework," said Bowman. She suggests working at a comfortable pace through the work outside of class in order to build a long-lasting comprehension of the material.

Many colleges require at least calculus or finite to receive a bachelors of science degree. "Getting that credit done in high school and to no longer have to worry about it is freeing," said Bowman. The chances of earning college credit in this course are high with Homestead High School's AP Calculus AB 2022 pass rate sitting at 86.3%, which is 30.7% higher than the global pass rate. For students considering going on to AP Calculus BC, the school's pass rate in 2022 was 95.8%. Taking one, or both, of the AP Calculus courses offered not only instills knowledge but also checks off a requirement in many colleges.



INTRODUCTION

November. The first of many deadlines in the stress-inducing journey that is college admissions. Much like the graduating classes before it—and the ones following it—the Spartan class of 2023 must endure what is, for many, an obscure and uncertain process. In fact, according to self-reported statistics for Homestead High School's class of 2021, 93.9% of graduating seniors pursued higher education in a two- or four-year college.

For some, this is inspiring, as students take their education into their own hands, often achieving higher wages and increased job security in the process. For others, college admissions become even more daunting, as competition for limited spots grows even larger.

This fall, future Homestead graduates contemplate their postsecondary goals and confront the college admissions process.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: THE JOURNEY OF COLLEGE PREPARATION

written by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN & MADELINE PHUONG
designed by
Ganga Subramanian

SPARTANS TODAY

Year-by-year college readiness checklists often portray the freshman year of high school as a period of acclimating middle schoolers to high school. Others consider it a time to determine possible careers early and to start gaining accolades.

Freshman Nia Byers, who has always wanted to be a veterinarian, is interested in planning ahead.

"I have been working on finding volunteer and shadowing opportunities for myself so that I can gain some experience," Byers said. She is planning to join clubs and experience new things, while refusing to limit herself to one interest. She hopes to prioritize her academics this year as well. Byers wants to be a well-rounded student, but will also keep her postsecondary goals in mind as she progresses through the school year.

High school students are expected to begin formulating their postsecondary goals in sophomore year. According to Federal Student Aid—an office of the United States Department of Education—students should research majors, attend career information events and discuss colleges with their high school counselors. In addition, it is expected that sophomores spend their summer productively.

While freshman year and sophomore year are typically known for their (relative) tranquility, junior year is notorious for being one of the most difficult years of high school. It is the year that students scramble to join extracurriculars, gain leadership positions and get serious about their futures. At Homestead High School, juniors are offered more Advanced Placement (AP), dual credit, honors and elective courses than any year prior. Admissions officers expect students to take advantage of as many rigorous courses that their high school provides.

Colleges look at a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) at the end of junior year for admissions decisions, and merely ask for senior year grades after enrollment to ensure that a student is on track academically. Even though 67% of the GPA work has been finished by the end of sophomore year, there is significant academic pressure during the eleventh grade.

Daniel Lopez, current junior and prospective engineer, expressed that he has felt the pressure of college applications even before junior year. Academically, he feels prepared, but when it comes to building an impressive resume, he feels a little less secure.

"By sophomore year, or maybe even by freshman year, it seems as if one already has to have a general idea about what they want to do after high school," Lopez said. "I still feel unprepared in that I'm somewhat unaware of what colleges look for in a student."

Lopez is not alone in his uncertainty, as others in the class of 2024 share his

confusion and frustration. It is no secret that colleges look for stellar grades and test scores, but there is no one extracurricular or activity that guarantees admission. Even the most stellar candidates for top schools are not exempt from rejection.

Fellow junior Sai Ramani, who plans to study music performance and eventually become a professor of Jazz Studies, said that "competition at the collegiate level is intense." On top of balancing academics and extracurriculars, Ramani will have to complete an audition as a part of a supplemental application.

To prepare for the unique college admissions process and his eventual major, Ramani participates in several music-related extracurriculars, including jazz band, marching band, all-state and all-nation ensembles. He even plays gigs around town in his spare time.

Similarly, Kyra Wagmeister (12) plans to study music performance as well as biochemistry in college. With help from a college consultant, Wagmeister began looking into prospective colleges in the middle of her junior year. She visited campuses and narrowed down her list over the summer before senior year.

However, her college preparation journey began well before that. In the classroom, Wagmeister took advantage of available honors and AP classes in her sophomore and junior years to prepare for the rigor of college courses.

"In school, it's a lot easier to focus on the academic side versus the personal growth side," Wagmeister said. "Outside of school, you can show your character through various activities or clubs."

While she did not regret her course load over the past three years, she recognized that taking higher level classes resulted in less time for her interest in music performance. Looking back at her high school career, Wagmeister suggested some improvements to how high school can prepare students for higher education: "It would be a lot better if we're always being challenged—in a healthy way, not in an extreme setting."

Beyond meeting the pressure to perform well academically, she wants to find a way to pique the interest of college admissions officers. As the college applicant pool grows by the year, students must differentiate themselves from the crowd to heighten their chances of acceptance.

THE EXPECTATION

Dennis Eller—Wagmeister's college consultant and owner of Eller's College Connection—affirmed the importance of academic and extracurricular planning when it comes to college applications. However, that's not all that students should be thinking about.

"There is so much more to high school than your college resumé," Eller said. "Find those classes, those clubs, those teams that interest you. Throw yourself into those. Colleges value depth over breadth."

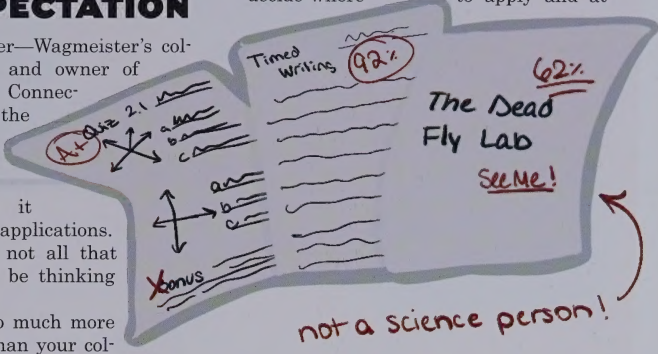
He recommended that students go beyond the classroom as well, encouraging engagement in community events and service. From personal observation, Eller further noted an increase in "herd mentality" among high schoolers in recent years, both in terms of applying to college and declaring one's major. He advised that students take the time to find a place of higher education that complements their interests and goals.

"Colleges have personalities just like students do," Eller said. "'Know thyself' first and then seek an undergraduate experience that will help you grow[] in all the ways that you want and need to grow."

Amy Hamilton, who has been a grade 10 to 12 counselor at Homestead for two decades, helps students determine exactly what type of higher education experience they seek. From those looking into the military to those going straight into the workforce, Hamilton gives students support through sophomore-, junior- and senior-year meetings. She encouraged students to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, interests, income goals and preferred living location to narrow down career options.

"Usually, when a student tells me what they are thinking about doing and then they take a test or quiz, we find that they are already on the right track," Hamilton said. "The sooner they start planning in high school, the less it'll be stressful."

Lastly, Hamilton gave advice for students as they visit college campuses and decide where to apply and attend: "Keep notes on your visits. Take pictures. The more you know, the better your decision will be."



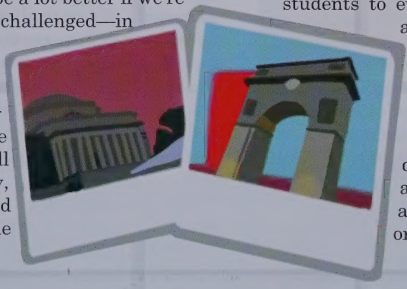
Purdue University in West Lafayette is one of 86 postsecondary institutions in Indiana and one of thousands in the United States. Assistant Director of Admissions Stephanie Hollister stated that "Purdue looks for students who are academically prepared to succeed in their chosen major as well as competitive to the overall applicant pool." A competitive applicant has potential both inside and outside the classroom, which can be demonstrated through extracurricular leadership, perseverance in personal life and a variety of other ways. Despite this, there is no set formula to success in the college application process.

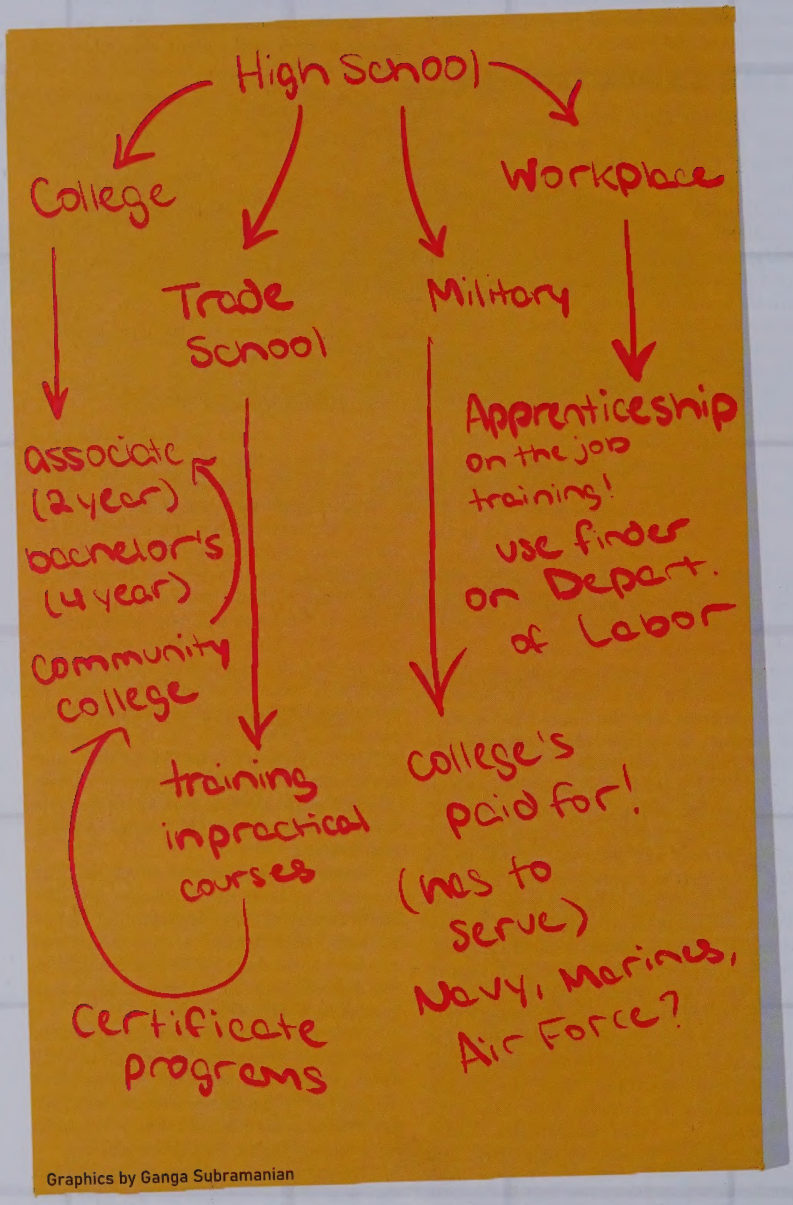
"Since we use a holistic review, we look carefully at both the academic and personal factors in every application," Hollister said. "Both of these are important and we don't treat them like a math equation. We want to treat each application as representing a whole person."

This interplay between self-discovery and higher education is bound to vary from student to student. Purdue Fort Wayne (PFW) admissions counselor Griffen Waltmire maintained that everyone is on a unique higher education journey.

"No one is going to have life figured out the first day of college, so try your best to ask questions, be vulnerable to change and be open to learning a field that you wish to go into," Waltmire said. "Although it may seem like a scary concept, college is an experience of a lifetime."

When looking for prospective fresh-





Graphics by Ganga Subramanian

men, he values students who possess positivity, creativity and curiosity. While PFW maintains academic expectations through its 2.3 GPA minimum, Waltmire mentioned an equally important aspect: "mental health and awareness." He conceded that "college can be challenging at times" and that this recognition is crucial to prioritize student health in higher education.

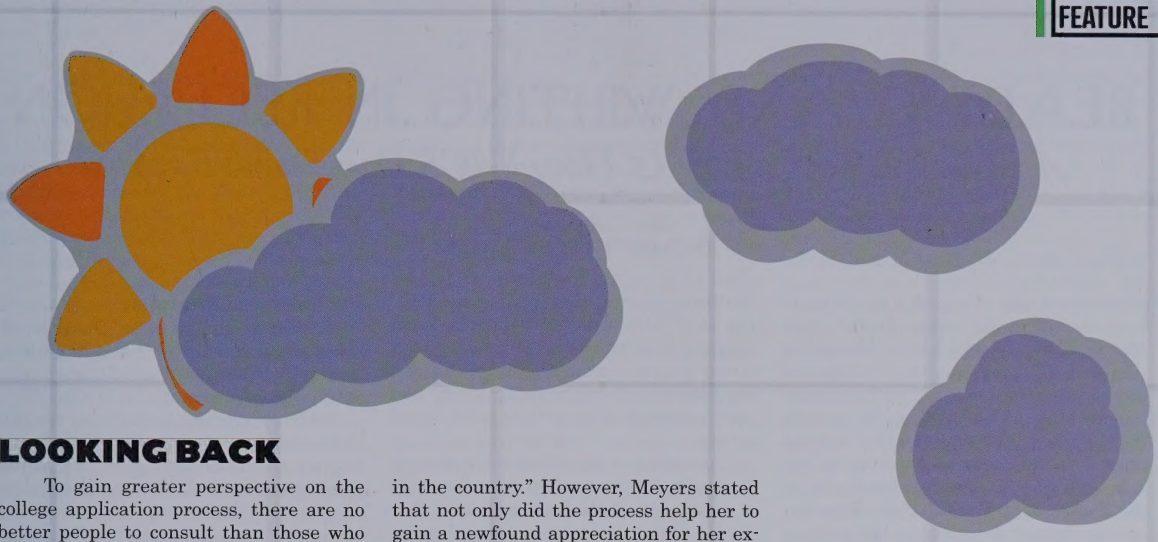
In the same way, Ethan Wright—admissions counselor at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)—highlighted the importance of authenticity for students' sakes.

"As an individual who grew up in Northern Indiana being a homosexual male, being my true self was hard at times. However, here at IUPUI I never had an issue," Wright said. "Be authentically you. Make sure you are trying your best to achieve what you want to achieve. Do not let other[s] make decisions for you."

In addition, he recommended balancing academic and personal growth during one's high school years. Now "a test optional facility," IUPUI does not simply focus on the numbers. Wright underscored the insight that colleges can gain from effective personal essays, which give students the opportunity to share their interests, significant life events and future plans.

Universities such as Purdue West Lafayette, PFW and IUPUI are not students' only options when it comes to higher education. In fact, the community college system is a postsecondary route that often allows greater flexibility in one's educational experience. Robyn Frederick, who is Ivy Tech Community College Fort Wayne's Director of Admissions, explained that Ivy Tech has courses and training programs that can be completed in less than four years while still providing students with strengthened career opportunities.

"I have talked with students who didn't think college was for them before exploring the community college system," Frederick said. "We work with students at all points in their higher education journey."



LOOKING BACK

To gain greater perspective on the college application process, there are no better people to consult than those who have gone through the process and came out unscathed on the other end.

Emmalyn Meyers, a class of 2020 Homestead graduate and current sophomore at Arizona State University, reflected on her college application process.

Meyers rejected the idea that colleges are looking for authenticity in their applicant pool: "If college admissions representatives were truly looking for authenticity in applications, why would all admissions coaches tell applicants to exaggerate and oversell their accomplishments?" She stated that it is all about students' presentation on their Common Application that counts.

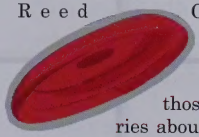
Looking back, Meyers found that high schoolers are put under extreme pressure "to start facing their future" and the age that this starts "keeps getting smaller." Figuring out where passions lie and what students want to do with their future takes careful consideration, plenty of time and experience. Having to choose early places a considerable burden on students who are interested in a variety of subjects or who haven't found their passion yet. However, no student is the same, and some come early to these conclusions.

Meyers then transitioned into talking about her own "college journey," considering the way that she comes across "at face value." She described preparing herself to be the best possible college applicant through rigorous courses, extracurriculars and essays, "just to go to a school with one of the highest acceptance rates in the country." However, Meyers stated that not only did the process help her to gain a newfound appreciation for her experience at ASU, but that she had also learned a lot about herself.

In addition, Meyers addressed the dream school phenomenon, having experienced it herself. Many students have a dream school based on the criteria that matters to them—a beautiful campus, the ideal Greek life, top-notch academics, etc. The reality of college applications is that even after all the hard work, college decisions are ultimately a lottery. Students can share their achievements, character and love of learning to tip the scale one way or another, but there is no guarantee of admission.

Meyers tacked on her own special advice for current students who are dreading the process: "Being rejected from your dream school does not make you any less valuable as a student, person, or friend."

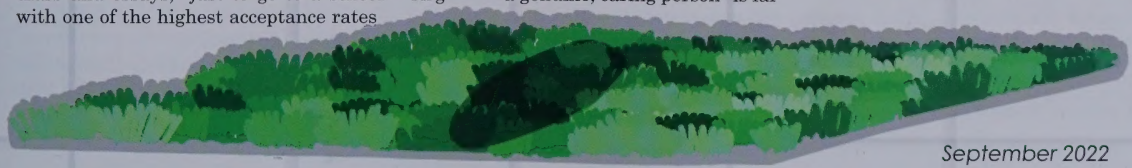
Another class of 2020 Homestead graduate, June Hill, who currently resides in Portland, Oregon as a sophomore at Reed College, provided her own unique perspective on the process. Her advice for those hearing horror stories about students who have it all—a perfect GPA, 1600 SAT, an award in four different sports, 200+ hours of volunteering—but do not get into any of their top choices, is that it isn't necessary to be "superman." However, it is important to display a love of learning; being "a genuine, caring person" is far more memorable than test scores. Most notably, she took the stance that colleges do look for authenticity in their applicant pool.



"Colleges don't care about the things you don't care about," Hill said. She believes in the old adage that quality over quantity is more impressive to colleges when it comes to extracurriculars. This has the advantage that it is easier on a high school student's schedule to only participate in extracurricular activities that are meaningful to them.

Hill added that it is important to "prioritize your mental health," since the college admissions process is difficult. It can often help to lean on the people that are closest to provide the necessary support to get through a mentally taxing time.

Ultimately, she provided clarity: "Guess what? College isn't everything. It's not the end of the world if you don't get into the school you want, or if you end up somewhere you don't love as much as you thought you would."



READING AND WRITING IN RECESSION

America's Literacy Lost & How SACS Can Spark Revival

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL & KAITLYN FRY

It's the first day of school. I'm sitting in my second-period class—Poetry with Mrs. Smith—and she begins to explain that we will be reading five collections of poetry this semester, each with an essay to write. An audible sigh echoes through the classroom, and I'm reminded of a sad reality: the majority of students do not enjoy reading or writing, especially in the context of an English class. Even my brother frequently questions the purpose of having an English class in a society centered on STEM, asking why we read old books and write essays over them when they have no direct relevance to our lives.

The lack of interest in reading and writing is concerning because it is a strong contributor to the decline in reading and writing proficiency. While proficiency isn't the only benefit of reading and writing, a decline in proficiency is one of the more concerning outcomes of a loss of interest in English. A decrease in reading and writing proficiency can in turn lead to the loss of critical thinking, loss of cultural knowledge and societal values, weaker communication skills, and a loss of job skills.

Troublesomely, this is the prevailing attitude among students, which should be setting off alarm bells throughout the nation.

Troublesomely, this is the prevailing attitude among students, which should be setting off alarm bells throughout the nation. Undeniably, there is a lack of proficiency in English: data shows a decline in reading and writing ability, especially after valuable time was lost during the pandemic. According to consulting firm McKinsey and Company, "U.S. students ha[ve] lost the equivalent of almost half a school year of reading instruction" throughout the pandemic. While schools are starting to address some of the factors that are contributing to the loss of proficiency, fully addressing the lack of student interest in reading is an additional challenge. Revitalizing reading and writing as a point of interest is crucial: not only can it help bring proficiency up, but it can ensure that students are reaping the numerous benefits that reading and writing provide in more than just a school setting.

According to data from the American Institutes for Research, "the percentage of public school students who said they read 30 minutes or more a day, besides homework, declined by four percentage points from 53 percent in 2017 to 49 percent in 2019." Writing ability is in similar decline, and a 2017 article from the New York Times reports that on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), "three-quarters of both 12th and eighth graders lack proficiency in writing."

The newest numbers, released on September 1st by the NAEP, revealed that reading fell an average of 5 points across the US, and 15 points in the Midwest specifically. Scores are at their lowest levels in years, and students are "at the same reading level as in 2004", according to Chalkbeat. The Wall Street Journal reported that, "the results mark the largest drop in reading scores since 1990." With the full NAEP report coming out later this fall, this issue becomes ever more pressing as days go by.

American schools are facing a crisis of students who not only don't want to read and write but can't.

American schools are facing a crisis of students who not only don't want to read and write but can't. This is a serious problem that needs a solution, and there are two questions that need answered: first, what Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) is doing to address the nationwide decline of reading and writing proficiency; and second, how SACS is addressing one of the root causes of that decline- students' lack of interest in reading, writing and English class as a whole.

Proficiency's Plummet:

The more immediate and easier-to-address problem is the plummet in reading and writing proficiency. While this has its roots at the elementary level, the effects of declined reading proficiency are felt at the middle and high school levels and beyond. Students need to be able to use comprehension and clarity in order to be successful in classroom and professional settings.

Nicole Vickrey, Homestead's English department chair, understands that the importance of proficiency extends beyond high school: "The department's goal is to provide students with instruction in reading, writing, and speaking and listening in a way that will prepare them for life beyond high school. We want students to become critical thinkers and readers and be able to communicate those thoughts effectively." To accomplish this, there must continue to be a district-wide commitment to developing readers and writers.

In order for the high school English department to achieve its goal of creating effective readers and writers, it has to be provided with students that have mastered the foundational skills required to become proficient readers and writers. Jean Russell, the literacy specialist at Covington Elementary School, explained how SACS builds literacy skills beginning in kindergarten: "There are 5 essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. ... When we are able to systematically, purposefully teach readers starting with phonemic awareness, and then balancing instruction in phonics, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency, readers learn to

"... readers learn to 'crack the code' of words and sentences, meaning and inference."

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To help keep all students engaged and on track, SACS has programs for both advanced students and those who need

some extra help. At the elementary level, the ALPHA program at Aboite Elementary acts as a magnet school to pull in "gifted and talented" students who need advanced instruction. For students who struggle, there is the Title 1 program. Haverhill Elementary Title 1 instructor Michael Stout said: "Title 1 is a program designed to help students get a boost in their reading and mathematics efficiency. Title 1 instructors work with classroom teachers and administrators to identify areas of concern and to implement strategies intended to support student growth."

These programs expand and reinforce SACS's balanced literacy approach. Russell detailed the process, explaining that "when letters are introduced, they have the conceptual understanding of sounds to start "cracking the code" to read. As children are able to decode words, we discuss the meaning of a book and think about the author's intent."

The approach that SACS takes to reading and writing is designed to build on itself. Dr. Lynn Simmers, SACS assistant superintendent, said that the district focuses on the "pivotal transitions from elementary to middle school and middle to high school."

SACS's approach has paid off; unlike many Indiana schools, SACS has performed well on state assessments like IREAD-3 (ranked 104th of 370 districts) and the 11th-grade SAT (ranked 23rd of 355 districts), which indicates that the district's strategies—involving both teachers and parents—are working. Despite these positive results, Simmers emphasized that "our entire school community (leaders, parents, students, teachers, and staff members) are committed to continuous improvement. ... We continually want to improve and be better, do better by looking at data."

IREAD-3 State Average: 81.6% at proficiency
Whispering Meadows Elementary School: 85.1%
Aboite Elementary School: 96.0%
Lafayette Meadows Elementary School: 93.6%
Haverhill Elementary School: 93.2%
Deer Ridge Elementary School: 88.4%
Covington Elementary School: 84.9%

11th-grade SAT State Average: 50.5% at College-Ready Benchmark
Homestead High School 11th grade: 70%

SACS has strong numbers, but there is still room for improvement, which Simmers noted. English and Language Arts teachers in the district have identified areas of weakness that could be targeted for improvement.

"There is not as much desire from students to advance their reading skills or to polish and perfect a draft of writing," said Jamie Smith, who teaches Poetry and Film Lit at Homestead. "'It's good enough' seems to be the trend in writing, even if it only reads like a first draft. Simply finishing the essay seems to be the goal, rather than polishing the essay so that ideas are clear. Of course, that doesn't count the students who WON'T even write the essays at all. ... [W]ithout a strong vocabulary developed through reading a variety of content and style, students struggle to be specific and clear in their writing."

"'It's good enough' seems to be the trend in writing, even if it only reads like a first draft."

Dr. David Price, Advanced Placement Literature and Composition teacher at Homestead, has noticed that "we live in a post-literate culture. Few people read and even fewer write. Many students I have taught over the years do not read. Those who do often read books that are simply not worth reading and many 'readers' simply do not know how to read."

"We live in a post-literate culture. Few people read and even fewer write."

Middle school teachers have also taken note of trends in reading and writing proficiency.

"I feel I have more reluctant readers than in the beginning of my career." Susan Mumma, an eighth-grade Language Arts teacher at Summit Middle School, said. "Especially in the last several years, I feel writing is more rushed and abbreviated; for example, I get text-speak in formal writing assignments!"

Jennifer Rinehart, who teaches sixth-grade Reading at Summit Middle School, agreed with Mumma about reluctant readers: "Student reading levels aren't as high as they used to be and many kids struggle to have the resilience and drive to finish a book. They begin a book but then quickly lose interest and struggle to get wrapped up in the story."

These teachers' observations illustrate a different reality than the one of SACS' scores. However, two things can be true at the same time: students can have strong enough proficiency to perform on exams while lacking the interest and dedication to perform in English and Language Arts classes. Moreover, it is possible that the standards required from today's tests are less demanding than the standards that experienced teachers have set in the past. It is possible that students can attain today's standards and still be behind where students of the same age were 20 years or even 10 years ago.

Although SACS has worked hard to create effective readers and writers who can live up to today's standards, these skills will fade if students do not have an interest in reading and writing both outside of school and post-graduation. Furthermore, if we want readers and writers to reach the standards of past readers and writers, rekindling an interest in reading and writing is even more imperative. Without a renewed interest, America's decline in reading and writing proficiency may slow, but it will not stop.

Waning Interest:

"It's always been a struggle to get students to read at home and outside of school, but now more so than ever. Books are competing with student cellphones and all that comes with them," said Rinehart. The data supports her observation; according to a 2018 article in The New Yorker, the proportion of Americans reading "(fell) from 26.3 percent of the population in 2003 to 19.5 percent in 2016." In addition to this data, teachers in the district shared what trends in reading and writing they have noticed over the years.

"Books are competing with student cellphones and all that comes with them."

Price shared his own theory on why proficiency has declined in tandem with interest:

> Many so-called educators have embraced the notion of skills-based teaching, which means that students are asked to perform tasks and demonstrate proficiency in daily activities focusing on excerpts and short pieces of writing. Many educators have abandoned the notion of sustained reading of complex texts; many have also abandoned the practice of reading books in their entirety. One can only become a good writer by first becoming a good reader, and good reading requires persistence over time in a continuous act of reflection that elicits meaning in language.

Smith had similar concerns about the decline in interest:

> 25+ years ago, it wasn't unusual for me to see students reading books while I was trying to teach (and these were NOT assigned books).

I would have to tell them to put the book away and pay attention in class. That definitely doesn't happen anymore, although I almost wish it would. When I taught AP Literature (at a different school) 16 years ago, students would rush into class enthusiastic about what happened in the reading the night before, wanting to talk about characters and decisions and events. But lately, those discussions don't happen. I can only assume it is because no one read the assignment because if they had, students would definitely want to talk about it. So basically, the trend seems to be moving away from taking the time to read and enjoy it. Reading and writing take discipline, and they are skills that will regress if not exercised. That concerns me the most.

Technology is another factor that has complicated reading and writing interests. When it comes to reading interest, Homestead Creative Writing and Advanced Composition teacher Scott Hill finds technology a barrier, and said,

I think it is clear that reading has declined over the past twenty years. Compared to the immediate gratification, the instant dopamine bursts of TikTok and scrolling and streaming episodes of The Office for the third time, reading has a disadvantage. It requires solitude, which is hard to find; I find it hard to read if my phone is even in the room, for example. And I think this epidemic of FOMO anxiety is a problem, too, that a lot of the young, online generation, when they are reading, are always wondering what they are missing, what new meme has dropped that their friends are talking about without them. It's impossible to concentrate. The thing is, if you can slow down enough to appreciate the solitude of reading, it becomes a beautiful antidote for FOMO. It's JOMO, the joy of missing out.

However, some teachers have found technology to be beneficial. English 10 and 11 Homestead teacher Ellen Nelson noted a positive change in writing interest: "Technology is a trend that is very different from when I started teaching. I like how students are more inclined to edit writing because they don't have to actually hand-write multiple drafts. Revision has taken on a new and easier path. Also, information is a click away—whether it be a model of good writing or a biographical video about an author!"

Technology's role in reading and writing is debated, but the district has explored proven methods in an attempt to increase interest. Simmers explained that "we know giving students a voice and choice in what they read or write about at school positively increases student interest and engagement." These approaches seem to be successful, especially at the elementary level.

Chelsey Kittredge, a first-grade teacher at Lafayette Meadows Elementary School, shared that "engaging students in reading really stems from their interest. We have a lesson about choosing a "just right book", which includes finding books that interest them. To keep kids interested, I talk to them and observe books they choose for themselves, including observing them during library time and at our Book Fairs."

"Engaging students in reading really stems from their interest."

Writing at the elementary level, Kittredge finds, is more difficult: "Writing can be tricky, as it's not a favorite for a lot of kids. At the beginning of the year, we write Small Moment stories, which are true stories about themselves. It helps them discover that they are writers and they can write about themselves (which they typically love and it comes easier to them)."

Another important tool to encourage student interest in reading and writing is the school libraries.

"My biggest goal for middle-school level students is to help them find authors or genres that they enjoy reading. When students head to high school, their visits to the school library shift from finding and checking out books to finding information for academic assignments. So I'm trying to help them find themselves as readers with the hope I'll get them hooked before they get busy with high school and then adult life," said Ben Moore, media specialist at Summit Middle School.

"I'm trying to help them find themselves as readers with the hope I'll get them hooked!"

Addressing the waning interest in reading and writing, both in and out of the classroom, proves a greater challenge. However, if the decline in interest is not addressed, decreased proficiency will only be one of the adverse effects on American society. A society of readers and writers is the prerequisite to a society capable of critical thinking and of communication; a society with a robust understanding of language; a society with cultural knowledge, values and morals. Helping students (and the general public) to understand the usefulness and importance of reading and writing can help revive interest in them.

Beyond English Class:

A false, yet frequent claim made by students is that the skills learned in English aren't useful outside of the English classroom setting. However, English is used across all of the core subjects: math, science and social studies all require proficient reading and writing skills, as well as an interest in reading and writing in those subject areas.

Brianna Lisak has been teaching for seven years. Lisak teaches U.S. and World History. She said that the proficiency in reading is the same. However she noticed that students have been trying to read so quickly that they do not understand what they are reading. With writing, Lisak has noticed that using correct punctuation and capitalization has gone downhill; she thinks it is because of social media. Lisak knows that some students like reading, but they usually separate that interest from school. Students are often surprised that they have to write outside of English class. Many students don't know why it is important to write in her class. She thinks that it is important because it gives students the ability to find out what they believe in.

Lisa O'Dell has been teaching for fifteen years and teaches biology. She has seen an increase in texting like writing including abbreviations in assignments. However, O'Dell has seen that students are connecting the reading and writing to ongoing and historical events in the world. This helps students build interest in reading and writing. O'Dell thinks that it is important to write in her class because "writing allows students to reflect on their thoughts and clearly and thoughtfully express them. I want to understand what they think, and reading their writing allows me to do that."

"Writing allows students to reflect on their thoughts and ... express them. I want to understand what they think, and reading their writing allows me to do that."

While math classes don't have much reading and writing there are numerous word problems on homework and tests. Kim Brown teaches geometry and algebra in past years; she has been teaching for

seven years. She has noticed a decrease in the ability to comprehend word problems, especially in the latest years and dealing with Covid-19. In the latest years she also noticed that a portion of her students had to retake Algebra or Geometry.

Additionally, the skills learned in English and Language Arts classes are valuable outside of the classroom in both work and social settings. Vickrey said, "considering communication is one of the most essential skills of life, English is necessary. Beyond high school, people are required to think critically and communicate with others daily. The skills being taught in our courses allow for students to build these skills for any avenue they pursue post-secondary."

Russell is adamant that reading specifically can help develop skills that are useful outside of the classroom:

> Books teach us. No matter what the author's original purpose, whether to entertain, inform, or persuade, each book meets us where we are and moves us. ... Books promote empathy and emotional intelligence. Information is constant in the age of technology, but turning off the internet and allowing our brains to be fully immersed in what an author painstakingly wrote for us from beginning to end, strengthens our brain, creates stamina, increases vocabulary, and expands our schema. There is even a Yale research study to support that people who read books live an average of two years longer than those who do not.

"Books teach us. No matter what the author's original purpose, ... each book meets us where we are and moves us."

"From my perspective, we are preparing today's learners for tomorrow's opportunities, whatever those opportunities may be. In order to be prepared for work and life, our students must be able to read and write. When I think about those skills learned in an English class, I'm thinking about the Portrait of a Graduate skills that can be practiced. For example, students will still need to be able to collaborate and work with others on projects, and critically gather and interpret information," Simmers said. "Regardless of the intended job field, we need to be able to read and comprehend and make inferences, so I would argue that [English classes] are inextricably linked to situations that will be encountered in the real world."

The skills practiced in English are undeniably useful in both other subjects and experiences beyond the classroom. Explaining to students how these skills can be applied to the wider world is a simple way to increase student interest. Students want to learn things that they know will help them in the world outside of school, and when the connection between a class at school and real life isn't clear, they lose drive and interest in learning about that subject. Simply providing justification for the classes students are required to take is an easy step to revive interest in reading and writing.

Reviving Reading & Writing:

On the global stage, the US ranks 13th in reading, according to the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). While SACS has found ways to maintain proficiency in reading and writing, the rest of the nation has not been so successful. SACS needs to continue addressing the declining interest in order to ensure that students carry both proficiency and passion for reading and writing into the rest of their lives, as well as raise student skill levels to the standards of years past.

There is some hope for reviving reading and writing. Remember that The New Yorker article from earlier? It also found that among those who did read, people "spent 1.39 hours reading in 2003, rising to 1.48 hours in 2016." This means that existing readers are reading more; ergo, if we can hook more students on reading and writing, the amount of time they spend reading should increase over time.

SACS has already made headway into reviving interest in reading and writing: investing time and money into creating well-developed libraries, encouraging teachers to allow students to choose what they want to read and write, creating curriculums that build readers and writers from kindergarten up and encouraging teachers to demonstrate a love of reading to their students.

Simmers placed emphasis on the importance of that last aspect, insisting that teachers and staff should be "modeling the joy of reading on a consistent basis, whether that be reading aloud in a kindergarten classroom or reading [their] own book during independent reading in a 5th-grade classroom." In addition to this, there is more that can be done: placing an emphasis on the "why" behind what students do in English class; sharing the benefits—both personal and societal—of reading and writing; building reading stamina throughout a K-12 education; and, critically, meeting students where they are at.

Teachers and staff should be "modeling the joy of reading on a consistent basis."

Vickrey emphasized the role that parents can play in revitalizing reading and writing: "Another important piece of building readers and writers is adults reading to children. Introducing the reading process in those early years, even when it's mostly just pictures, helps in developing those language skills early on." Families can help hook their kids on reading and writing before they even set foot in a school, acting as an extra influence to reinforce the importance of reading and writing.

To revive reading and writing will require educators to meet students where they are—in a world of technology—and still find a way to turn them into readers and writers. Teachers are optimistic that reading and writing will persist and recover despite the challenges, and are willing to work to make that hope a reality.

"If you have ever been present when a reader actually has their 'aha' moment, and the letters on the page become words, and the words begin to have meaning, it is like fireworks and rainbows and the winning touchdown all wrapped up into one of the most exciting experiences you will ever have!" Russell said. "It never, ever gets old. I am motivated and excited to walk into school every day. Honestly, it is the very, very best job in the whole world."

"I think it goes back to the human desire to hear and tell good stories," said Beer. "Hearing good stories can be challenging, entertaining, and morally enriching. Writing good stories can help us feel that we are creating something of value, that we're putting something into the world that matters, something that quite possibly makes the world a better, more understandable, more beautiful place."

NOTE:

This version of *Reading and Writing in Recession* has been shortened due to spacial restraints. To read the full version of the article, visit www.hhsspartana.com.

Quizlet's Cash Grab

written by
THOMAS HILL
designed by Madeline Phuong

Over the summer, Quizlet made some major changes that most students regard as detrimental to the website's usefulness as a study tool. A few years ago, Quizlet introduced Quizlet Plus, a paid version of Quizlet that costs $48.00 per year, and added features such as the ability to highlight terms in different colors, step-by-step answers to questions, and even a customized study path. Over the years, Quizlet has removed features like Write, Gravity, and Spell. Now, the organization has made sweeping changes, making Learn and Test modes part of the paid Quizlet Plus, a decision that has caused more controversy than any of the company's other decisions.

Quizlet was launched in 2007 by Andrew Sutherland as a studying tool to aid students. Quizlet made many updates over the years, but the biggest changes started in 2016, when the website launched a redesign and hired Matt Glotzbach as their new CEO. Since then, the website has undergone serious alterations, seen by users as both positive and negative.

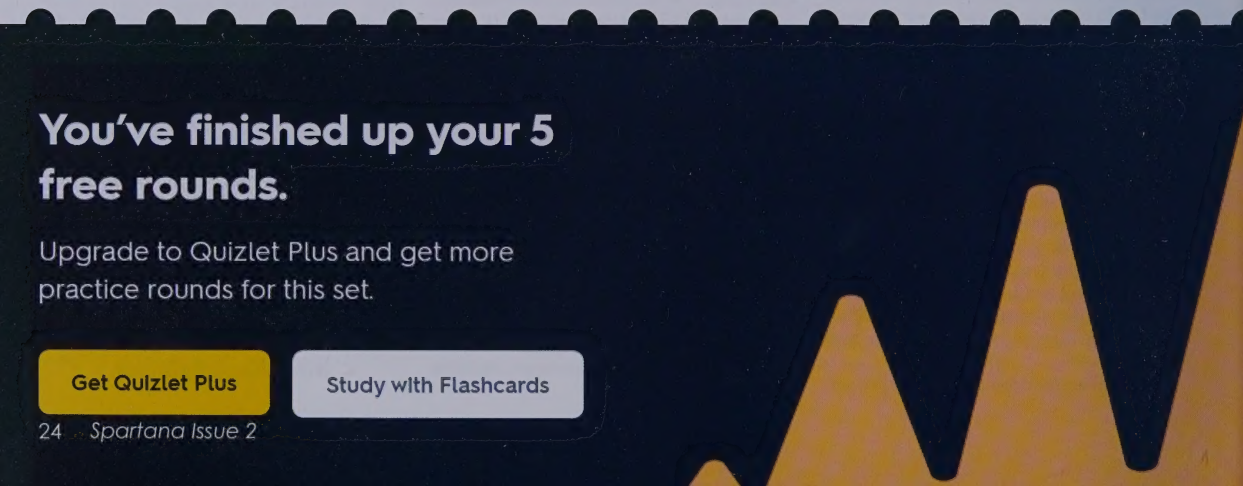
On the positive side, it's added Quizlet Live, a game mode that's multiplayer and allows students to study in a collaborative game. It also launched Quizlet Plus and Quizlet Teacher, paid versions of the website that enhance user's and teacher's ability to create detailed study sets that can be used in the classroom setting.

On the negative end, the site made the decision last year to place unskippable ads on the site, interrupting students' studying time (which could only be removed if you signed up for Quizlet Plus). Unfortunately, Quizlet has been slowly moving more and more content under the Quizlet Plus umbrella, making it harder for students to use the platform.

At Homestead High School, students are outraged at Quizlet's decision to place valuable studying tools behind a paywall. Lily Burns (12) had strong words when asked about the new paywall, and said, "I hate Quizlet. I don't like Quizlet anymore. ... Ban Quizlet!" Hunter Specht (12) said, "Though Quizlet used to be a primary study tool, its adoption of a subscription-based paywall has limited the functionality of the site and inhibited the overall value of creating a study set." Clearly, the tension between Quizlet's most loyal customers, high school students, and the company has reached a point of outright animosity. Burns pointed out that making aspects of the website paid features doesn't make sense for a company whose target demographic is high school and college students: "Quizlet is discriminating against students that can't pay for it!"

For students who are looking for alternatives to Quizlet, there are free study tools like Brainscape and StudyStack. Brainscape allows students to create flashcards and study them using spaced repetition, a method based on cognitive science. StudyStack also allows students to create flashcards and play a variety of games to study, greater than the number of options offered by Quizlet. Both of these free sites are available to students without ads or paywalls, making them accessible alternatives to Quizlet

Charging high school students to use the site is a turnoff, at least for Bernie Leal-Sierra (10), who said, "I used to make [Q]uizlets most of the time to study for my classes ... and was able to have free rounds in the Learn category. Now it just feels like a cash grab."


You've finished up your 5 free rounds.
Upgrade to Quizlet Plus and get more practice rounds for this set.
Get Quizlet Plus
Study with Flashcards

Short Reports

designed by Madeline Phuong

I-69 Crash on Aug. 6

written by Katelyn Styborski

If you were driving on I-69 on the Saturday of Aug. 6, you may have noticed that part of the highway was blocked off. The reason for this was a five-car pile up and a flipped-over semi-truck. This crash occurred around 5:30 pm and left cars stranded for hours. Thankfully, police and paramedics were quickly dispatched to the area, with firetrucks following swiftly after. One citizen heroically ran towards a burning car with a crow bar, attempting to free a woman trapped in her car. This crash resulted in no casualties. Four people were injured, and they have fully recovered as of today.

Parking Reminder

written by Stella Grable

Only staff are permitted to enter from Aboite Center Road. All students will have to access the building through door 14. Doors will open at 7:10 am. However, if you are entering the building after 7:45 am, you must use door 26. The best parking will be in the environmental center lot, so arrive early to get a good spot.

Construction Updates

written by Madeline Phuong

The $169 million addition and renovation project here at Homestead High School continues to progress. In August, the south ticket booth was completed, the elevator shaft masonry was put into place and the new bus lot on the southwest side of the school was paved. Also, the wood flooring of the main gym and the athletic and attendance offices neared completion. The location change of the bus lot temporarily re-routed students' end-of-day exit to doors 14, 24 and 25 until the opening of door one in early September. Door one now serves as students' main entrance and exit.

Graphics by Madeline Phuong

MIDTERMS: 2022

written and designed by
AZALEA ORSINI

The 2022 Midterms Elections are coming up! In the state of Indiana, the Secretary of State, a Senator, and the Representative for Allen County's district are up for election. As of Aug. 23, 2022, FiveThirtyEight rates the House of Representatives and the Senate as lean democrat and lean republican respective, meaning both are extremely competitive. If you'll be able to vote in this election, your vote WILL count. Here's what you need to know:

THE BALLOT:

HOUSE:

Incumbent - Jim Banks (R):
Main issues include inflation, being anti-abortion, anti-immigrant and promoting Former President Trump's America First agenda. As a self-proclaimed "Christian Nationalist," Banks is a staunch supporter of Donald Trump.

Gary Snyder (D):
Main opposition to Banks; main issues include climate protections, voting rights and supporting Biden's agenda. Snyder has no former political experience, and was involved in Indiana radio.

Nathan Gotsch (I): Independent challenger; main issues include inflation and ending corruption. Gotsch is a local journalist who helped inform Northeastern Indiana on Covid-19.

SECRETARY OF STATE:

Diego Morales (R):
Republican candidate; main issues are not available on his website, and social media doesn't provide much information on his policy either. In the website, he included that he is "a faith-guided conservative" and went to university in the Netherlands.

Destiny Wells (D):
Democratic candidate; main issues include non-partisan election verification and encouraging small businesses. Wells has been narrowly leading in the polls for the past week, meaning this race is a toss-up.

Jeff Maurer (L):
Libertarian candidate; main issues include election transparency, open audits of all counties, and encouraging small businesses.

Senator Young on the campaign trail,
COURTESY OF THE INDY STAR

The IN Voters Website!

SENATE:

Incumbent - Todd Young (R):
Main issues include inflation, being anti-abortion, securing the Mexican border and opposing President Biden. This would be Young's second term. Young has been in office since 2017.

Tom McDermott (D):
Young's main opposition; main issues include gun control, marijuana legalization, pro-choice legislation, LGBTQ rights and President Biden's Build Back Better agenda. The former mayor of Hammond, IN; he would be Indiana's first Democratic Senator since 2012.

James Sceniak (L):
Libertarian, third party candidate; main issues include inflation, pro-choice legislation, ending corporate welfare and criminal justice reform. If elected, James Sceniak would be the first and only Libertarian senator in the United States.

If you're 18, you may be thinking, "This is my first election! I don't know how to vote." See the email from Dr. Ginder you received on Aug. 23, 2022 for the link to register, and here's what April Johnson, Election and Absentee Voting Deputy from the Allen County Board of Elections had to say:

"The process of voting is pretty easy. You can go to our website to find your polling location. On election day they'll check your identification, usually a passport or drivers' license, show you how to vote and then you'll be good to go."

There are a set number of locations depending on the type of election, so if you volunteered at a polling station in 2020 or drove by one, it could be different for the 2022 midterms. Check the website for more information (https://allencountyinvoters.gov/).

Are you over sixteen, but not 18? You can still participate in the election in other ways! Firstly, you can volunteer at a polling station and earn $110. It may also count towards your community service. This can help relieve the polling locations if turnout is high, which it hopefully will be, and it would look great on a college application. Consider it! Even better, anyone of any age can participate in Indiana's "I Voted" sticker design competition. If you're a creative person, visit https://www.in.gov/sos/2022-i-voted-sticker-design-competition/.

AP Gov. Teacher Mr. Byall has a few tips for new voters: "Identify who is running; do research on their background, experience, views, and proposals; select who (you) think would be best for that office. I would start with https://indianavoters.in.gov/ to see who is on the ballot. Go to their websites to learn more about them, as well as checking out a variety of articles about them" says Byall. He recommends registering early at the IN voters website.

The election is on Nov. 8 2022. Voting is your civic duty, so make sure to research your candidates, plan your day around voting and get out to the polls!

HOMESTEAD'S FIGHT AGAINST VAPES

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT &
YEVVA IRELAND

HOW HOMESTEAD IS CRACKING DOWN ON VAPING AND A LOOK INTO VAPING'S EFFECTS ON TEENS

Student vaping has become a prevalent issue in high schools across the nation, and Homestead High School is no exception.

HOMESTEAD'S NEW POLICY

The school board began discussing new policies to discourage vaping in March of 2022, deciding that at the start of the 2022-2023 school year, students caught using e-cigarettes on school grounds will be recommended for expulsion.

At a Southwest Allen County Schools' board meeting in March, the board stated its reasons for implementing this policy.

The policy's aim is to reduce the disruption caused by e-cigarettes and to reduce the use of such products in order to preserve the mental and physical health of students.

Homestead's Assistant Principal Jeff Kintz explained the policy changes, stating that "because it's illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to have a vape in their possession and on a school campus, there won't be a period of out-of-school suspension. It will be recommendation for expulsion."

This change was necessary because of the increase in vaping at Homestead and the consequent concern for students' health.

EFFECTS OF VAPING

The long-term health effects of vaping are just beginning to surface. Homestead chemistry teacher Rob Dillman said, "brains are not fully developed until around age 25. When students intake nicotine through vaping, they can harm the developing parts of the brain that control attention, learning and impulse control."

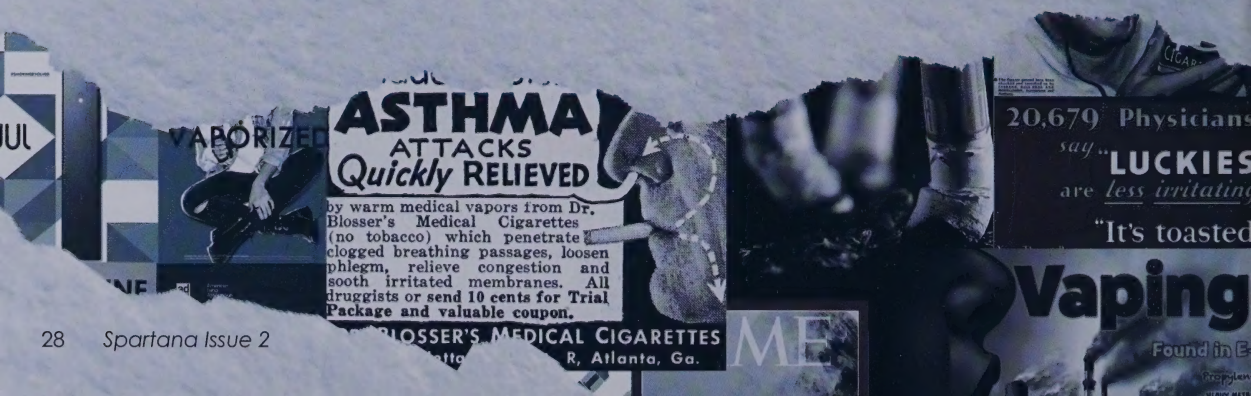
Nicotine also affects the receptors of many gratification-related neurotransmitters, such as dopamine and serotonin.

This can cause some teens who use nicotine devices to lose interest in sports or hobbies that they used to enjoy.

E-cigarettes were advertised as a safer alternative to help people quit smoking cigarettes, yet many developed a dependence on vapes.

Although e-cigarettes may not contain many of the other dangerous chemicals found in cigarettes, they still contain the highly-addictive nicotine.

Dillman shared that "people are under the misconception that vaping is safer from smoking cigarettes, when in fact e-cigs contain a much higher concentration of nicotine. The oils from the flavoring chemicals can accumulate in the lungs and cause short and long term damage."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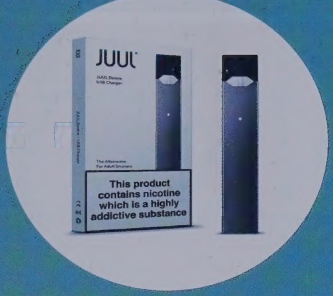
Quickly RELIEVED
by warm medical vapors from Dr. Blosser's Medical Cigarettes (no tobacco) which penetrate clogged breathing passages, loosen phlegm, relieve congestion and sooth irritated membranes. All druggists or send 10 cents for Trial Package and valuable coupon.
BLOSSER'S MEDICAL CIGARETTES
R, Atlanta, Ga.
20,679 Physicians
say "LUCKIES
are less irritatin
"It's toasted
Vaping

3,000 people were hospitalized with EVALI, a vaping-related lung disease, in 2021.



25% of high school seniors vape nicotine.

Sophomore Alyssa Niuh explained that she knew someone who vaped, "and it really took a toll on their mental and physical health." Even if it doesn't feel like it now, vape use could greatly hinder your life in the future.

ATTACK ON TEENS

Companies such as JUUL, SMOK and Geekvape offer a large variety of flavors, including cotton candy, bubblegum and berry, which are enticing to teens.

Because of the effect that they have had on teen vaping, some states have banned flavore e-cigarettes altogether.

In recent years, e-cigarette companies have substantially increased spending on advertisement from under $7 million to $115 million.

The 2014 National Youth Tobacco Survey reported that 70% of middle and high school students had been exposed to an e-cigarette ad.

This increase in advertising has had a major effect on the number of teens vaping. According to Truth Initiative, 18.5% of Indiana high school students have used an e-cigarette in the past month.

Using emotional appeals is another way that these companies target teenagers with their advertising.

According to the Addiction Prevention Coalition, many advertisements depict happiness and friendship to appeal to younger audiences.

This connection has been noticed by many people, and JUUL continues to be bombarded with lawsuits.

In 2021, North Carolina sued the company for promoting vaping among youth.

Even though JUUL didn't admit to targeting teens, the company agreed to pay North Carolina a fee of $40 million.

The goal of the new discipline policy regarding vapes is to discourage vaping altogether and to protect students from the harmful effects of this dangerous trend.

Furthermore, it is aimed at preventing students from facing the pressure to start vaping while at school.

If you or someone you know are currently struggling with addiction, talk to a friend, family member or even call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) line (1-800-662-4357) to discuss finding treatment.

MONKEYPOX

Should *YOU* be concerned?

written and designed by
SAMUEL COLE

On July 23, 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared monkeypox a health emergency of international concern. According to the New York State Department of Health, monkeypox is "a rare, viral infection that does not usually cause serious illness. However, it can result in hospitalization or death." As of Sep. 14, 2022, there are 188 cases of monkeypox in Indiana.

Common symptoms

- Rashes on or near the genitals, hands, feet, chest, face or mouth
- Rashes can initially look like pimples or blisters, and may be itchy or painful.
- Fever
- Chills
- Exhaustion
- Muscle aches and backaches
- Headaches
- Respiratory symptoms (such as sore throat, nasal congestion or cough)

More uncommon symptoms and signs

- Some people experience flu-like symptoms before a rash appears, while others get a rash first, which is occasionally followed by other symptoms.
- Symptoms usually start within three weeks of exposure to the virus. If someone has flu-like symptoms, they will likely develop a rash one to four days afterwards.
- Monkeypox can be spread from the time symptoms start to until the rash has healed, all scabs have fallen off, and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness usually lasts two to four weeks.

Origins of the virus

Monkeypox was actually discovered around 50 years ago in a group of captive primates, hence the name monkeypox. Most sources say the virus originated from central Africa, although some say that it came from northern Europe. It first started to spread to the rest of the world after several members of a London family became infected from being in contact with a family member who had visited Nigeria, where the virus is endemic. Cases then started showing up all across the globe, creating a very unusual outbreak, since only one person had travel history to an endemic location.

Treatment

There are no specific treatments for monkeypox yet. However, smallpox and monkeypox are genetically similar, which means that antiviral drugs and vaccines developed to protect against smallpox may be effective in the prevention and treatment of monkeypox.

Northeast Indiana resources

Information about monkeypox – including an information dashboard as well as further details about symptoms, how monkeypox is spread and who is at risk of exposure – can be found at the Indiana Department of Health website. A scheduled list of vaccine clinics can also be found there.

Mark III Tap Room (306 S. Walnut St., Muncie)
9 p.m. to midnight, Friday, Sept. 9; No appointment necessary

IU Health Methodist Hospital (1633 N. Capitol Ave., Suite 300, Indianapolis)
You can select your time and date at the required registration

How to prevent transmission of the virus

- If you suspect you have monkeypox or are showing symptoms, avoid close contact with anyone until you have seen a doctor.
- When seeing a healthcare provider, wear a mask
- Avoid gatherings, especially if they involve close contact.
- Wash your hands.
- Do not share personal hygiene items such as towels and toothbrushes.
- Isolate yourself from others.
- If isolation isn't possible, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends covering lesions, wearing a mask if there are respiratory symptoms and avoiding physical contact with others, among other things.
- Due to very limited supply of the vaccine, follow these guidelines until a vaccine is available.

Is it the next Covid-19?

Most likely, no. As of Aug. 3, 2022, the U.S. has reported around 6,600 cases according to the data from the CDC. States reporting the highest number of cases include New York, California, Illinois, Florida, Texas and Georgia. On Aug. 4, 2022, federal officials declared a public health emergency; meanwhile, the WHO declared a public health emergency of international concern in July. WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated in a press conference that "this is an outbreak that can be stopped if countries, communities and individuals inform themselves, take the risks seriously and take the steps needed to stop transmission and protect vulnerable groups. The best way to do that is to reduce the risk of exposure. That means making safe choices for yourself and others."

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Check out our past issues at hhsspartana.com!

the Spartana

Issue 3 October 2022

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Leditor

Dear Reader,

As temperatures plunge and leaves crisp, one thing is certain: fall is here. Fall break, long awaited, has come and gone, as has the first quarter of the school year.

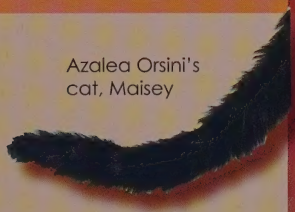
The October issue of the Spartana reflects this change in season, from a guide to favorite autumnal activities to a historical examination of the Salem Witch Trials. In a nod to this spooky time of year, we investigate the mythical, including Midwestern cryptids, Ouija boards and yes, even mermaids. We give you insight into a debate on Halloween tradition as well as holidays such as Día de los Muertos.

This issue, we honor the life and legacy of Caleb Swanigan, a former NBA player, Purdue Boilermaker and Homestead Spartan. We take a look at global and local happenings to help you stay informed, whether at the level of Student Government or in regard to the November 8 national midterm elections. Additionally, we bring you on Mr. Beer's journey to Indiana Teacher of the Year finalist and, in collaboration with HHS In Depth, provide an overview of the recitation competition Poetry Out Loud.

Explore the full extent of our multimedia collaboration with HHS In Depth at www.hhsspartana.com. As always, we welcome guest writers to contribute to our publication and website. Contact us at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com with questions or comments.

Happy reading,
Madeline Phuong and Ganga Subramanian

Got an ugly pet?
Send photos of your pet to hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com for a chance to be featured in a future issue of the *Spartana* and on our website at www.hhsspartana.com!



Azalea Orsini's cat, Maisey

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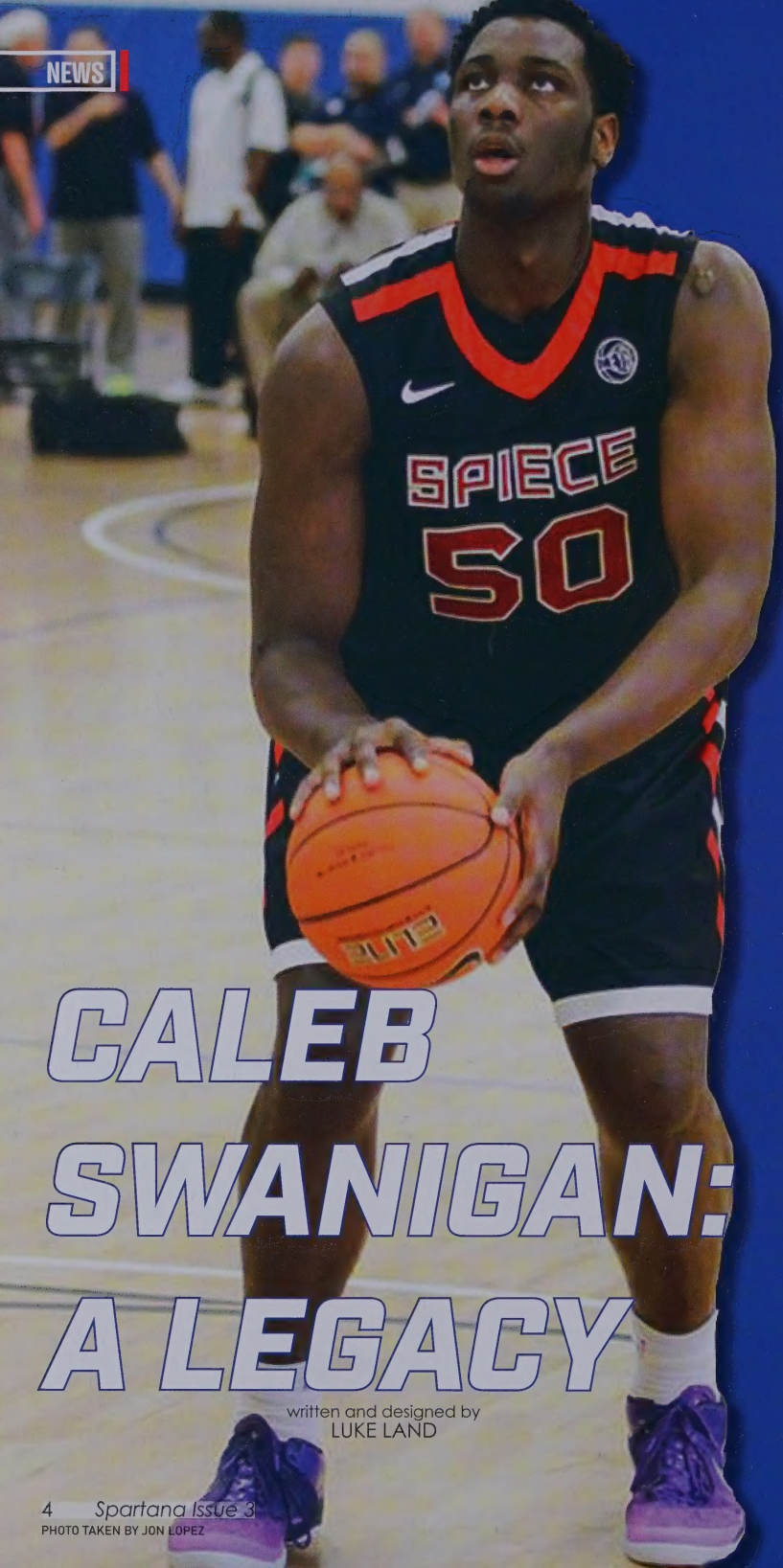


CALEB SWANIGAN: A LEGACY

written and designed by
LUKE LAND

PHOTO TAKEN BY JON LOPEZ

Over the summer, Homestead High School basketball legend Caleb Swanigan passed away at 25 years old due to natural causes. His death not only saddened the Spartan community, but his friends and family from Fort Wayne and Purdue University, as well as his professional basketball teammates on the Portland Trailblazers.

Caleb Swanigan was born on April 18, 1997, in Indianapolis. Swanigan grew up in volatile conditions, moving between Utah and Indiana multiple times. He lived in homeless shelters due to his father's drug abuse. He attended 13 different schools by the time he was 13 years of age.

When the Swanigan family moved to Houston, Swanigan's older brother, Carl Swanigan Jr., was worried about Caleb's health due to his obesity. Carl called his former Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) coach, Roosevelt Barnes, to help with Swanigan. Barnes adopted Caleb Swanigan and put Swanigan through workouts similar to the ones Barnes did in college. This is where Swanigan's love for basketball started.

Caleb had one goal to achieve during his high school career: winning a state championship. In his sophomore year, the Homestead basketball team lost at semi-state. In his junior year, he reclassified as a senior. He slimmed down and took over in his final year at Homestead.

Chris Johnson, the boys' varsity basketball coach at Homestead, said, "His goal was to win a state championship and we were able to win a state championship, and if he didn't reclassify, we probably win another state championship."

Johnson said it was hard to believe when he first heard of Swanigan's passing. A mutual friend of theirs broke the news to Johnson via text message.

"Everybody knew who Caleb Swanigan was," said Johnson. While at the Charlie Hughes Classic—a high school basketball tournament held during the summer for college coaches to look at high school talent—multiple coaches gave their condolences to Johnson.

Reflecting on his time at Homestead, Johnson will always cherish and remember the years he spent coaching Swanigan, who had a winning mentality.

Swanigan's impact will always be remembered at Homestead. Johnson said he was a leader; he didn't act like he was better than anyone else. He did what he was told and didn't complain.

"You have players after Caleb [Swanigan] like Jordan Geist, [Ben] Skowronek, [Brandon] Durnell and [Jack] Ferguson to keep on coming to say 'I got next,'" said Johnson. "He was the first to win a state championship besides gymnastics, and younger kids see that and want to be like that."

Swanigan was named Indiana's Mr. Basketball, the award for the best basketball player in the state. He was also named a McDonald's All-American, which is an all-star game for the top high school prospects in the United States and Canada. In addition, he was named a top-20 high school recruit in the nation, and he won multiple gold medals with the United States under-17 team and under-19 team.

PHOTO TAKEN BY MICHAEL HEINZ

He officially committed to Purdue University on May 17, 2015, to continue his basketball career. Raphael Davis, one of Swanigan's teammates at Purdue, said that Swanigan cared for the greater good. He cared about the people he was close with, and he was someone who cared about what he was doing.

"He showed me what real hard work was... there's levels to it and he showed me the highest level," said Davis.

Swanigan's work ethic was unmatched at Purdue. As a freshman, he was the hardest worker on the team.

"He was the hardest worker on the team so it was easy to work with him," said Davis.

He wanted to achieve the same thing at Purdue that he did at Homestead: winning a national championship with a school that hasn't had much success.

"He never cared about how many points he scored," said Davis.

Swanigan stayed for two years before entering his name in the NBA Draft, and during those two years, he left his mark at Purdue.

He broke multiple records, won the Big Ten regular season championship and made it to the Sweet Sixteen of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Tournament. He was also later named to the Third Team of the Big Ten All-Decade Team in 2020.

On June 22, 2017, Caleb Swanigan was drafted 26th overall by the Portland Trailblazers in the NBA Draft.

On draft night, Swanigan said, "Being selected tonight in the NBA Draft is a dream come true. I have been thinking of this moment for a long time. I know this is only the first step in my professional career, but I am extremely excited to begin this journey."

He participated in the NBA Summer League, an off-season competition where young players adapt to the next level. He earned All-Summer League First Team honors. He bounced around the NBA G-League from 2017 to 2020, and finally returned to the Portland Trailblazers before the Covid-19 pandemic. He quit basketball once the pandemic hit due to personal reasons.

"He should be viewed for his best moments which was when he was making people happy," said Davis. "His work ethic and story will be remembered for a long time... his basketball circle will make sure his story lives on."

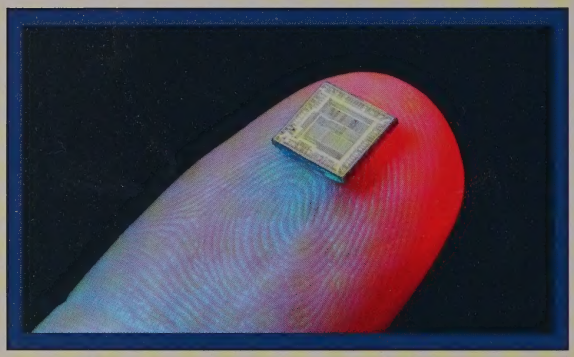
SHORT

written a
YEV

American HIMARS in the Russia-Ukraine War

The United States is providing High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) to assist Ukraine in the Russia-Ukraine War. The U.S. Marines states that American HIMARS have a one meter accuracy from 186 miles, allowing for multiple precise missiles to be launched at targets that directly affect the front lines of Russia, like ammunition storages, food storages and Russian command posts. Another reason HIMARS are effective is because their mobility permits Ukrainians to leave before Russians have time to react. Plus, the crew for each HIMARS requires only a gunner, driver and section chief to be launched. According to CBS News, American HIMARS are shifting the tides in this war.

High Mobility Artillery Systems
COURTESY OF LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION



Microchip
COURTESY OF COPORATE WELLNESS MAGAZINE

Taiwan's Silicon Shield

Taiwan controls the export of 90% of silicon microchips, which are key components in everything from microwaves to smartphones. On July 1 of this year, General Motors stated that 95,000 vehicles in Indiana could not be sold because they lacked these microchips. Because Taiwan also controls the export of 65% of semiconductors, it is a major geopolitical site. In a CBS 60 Minute interview between Scott Pelley and President Joe Biden, Biden told Pelley that America would defend Taiwan if there was an "unprecedented attack." Despite China's recent military drills, the Pentagon predicts China will not invade Taiwan for another two years.

Long Live the King

The Queen of England died on September 8 at 96-years-old. The palace stated that Queen Elizabeth II passed "peacefully" in Balmoral Castle located in Scotland, where her husband Prince Philip proposed and Queen Elizabeth II spent most of her summers. She will be buried with her husband, parents and sister in St. George's Chapel. Queen Elizabeth II served 70 years on the throne. Her death has reignited questions about the purpose the British Monarchy serves today and its place in Britain's politics. King Charles III began his rule as Britain's 61st monarch on September 8.

King Charles III
COURTESY OF NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

Britney Spears Will No Longer Perform Live

On September 11, Britney Spears posted on her Instagram account that she "probably won't perform again." Britney Spears won the legal battle against her conservatorship in November of 2021 and since then has released the song "Hold Me Closer" with Elton John. Although fans were excited to see Spears perform live again, Spears has made it clear that it is very unlikely she'll perform on stage again because she is "pretty traumatized" according to the September 11 post.

Britney Spears
COURTESY OF GROUP LA

Raptor II Engines
COURTESY OF @ELONMUSK

SpaceX Makes History with Raptor II Engines

Recently, SpaceX began testing full-flow staged combustion engines (FFSC engines) called Raptor II. FFSC engines are more efficient because they generate higher thrust by burning methane fuel and using oxygen as an oxidizer. Elon Musk proudly showed off the designs on his Instagram account (@elonmusk).

Weather and Environment Issues

Large amounts of rainfall in a monsoon in Pakistan this year has caused devastating consequences. Thousands of homes have been wrecked, millions of people displaced and many clean water systems destroyed. This monsoon may be one Pakistan's most destructive monsoons according to the United Nations International Emergency Fund.

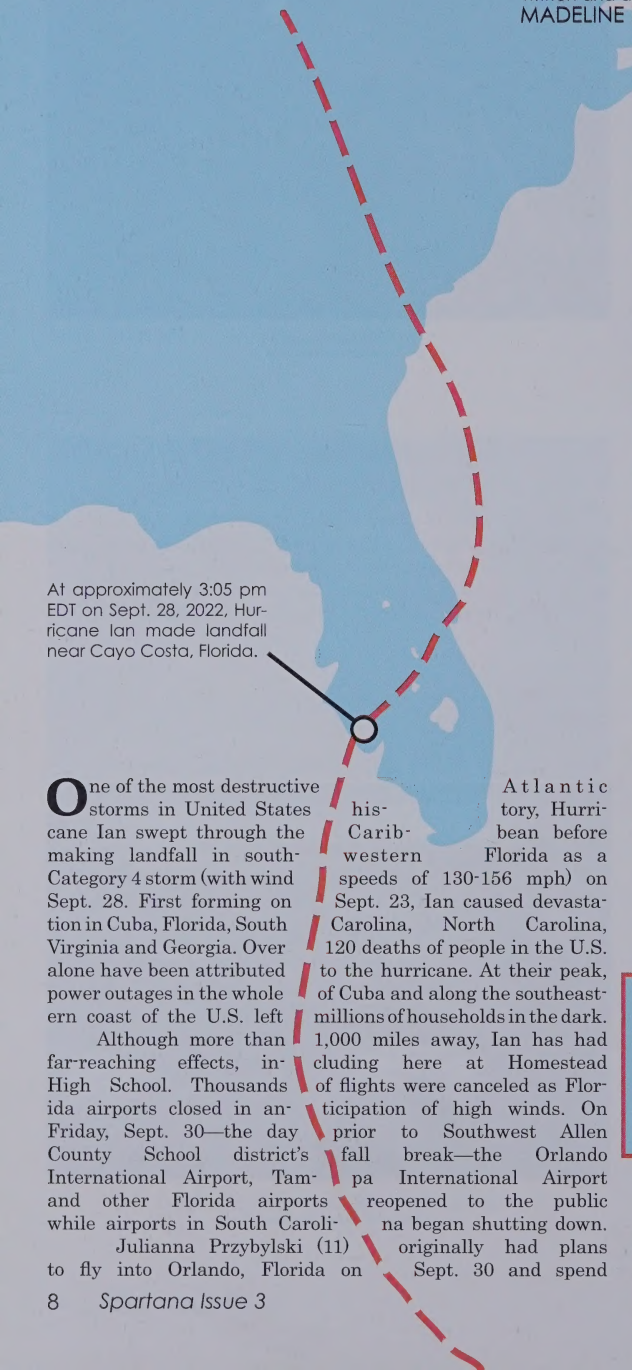
CBC news stated that Hurricane Fiona slammed the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Canada. Thousands of homes have been destroyed and many do not have access to clean water.

The Mosquito Wildfires in California have ruined over 80,000 acres of forest since it first began on September 6. Pacific Gas and Electric company (PG&E) is being sued for claims that they caused the mosquito fires. Litigation firm Shingleton Shreiber told the press that PG&E is responsible for 1,500 fires because of "poorly maintained utility equipment." Despite these allegations, the United States Forest Service claimed that the reasons for the fires are currently unknown.

Salinas, Puerto Rico after Hurricane Fiona
COURTESY OF ALEJANDRO GRANADILLO

Hurricane Ian

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG



One of the most destructive storms in United States history, Hurricane Ian swept through the Caribbean before making landfall in southwestern Florida as a Category 4 storm (with wind speeds of 130-156 mph) on Sept. 28. First forming on Sept. 23, Ian caused devastation in Cuba, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia and Georgia. Over 120 deaths of people in the U.S. alone have been attributed to the hurricane. At their peak, power outages in the whole of Cuba and along the southeastern coast of the U.S. left millions of households in the dark.

Although more than 1,000 miles away, Ian has had far-reaching effects, including here at Homestead High School. Thousands of flights were canceled as Florida airports closed in anticipation of high winds. On Friday, Sept. 30—the day prior to Southwest Allen County School district's fall break—the Orlando International Airport, Tampa International Airport and other Florida airports reopened to the public while airports in South Carolina began shutting down.

Julianna Przybylski (11) originally had plans to fly into Orlando, Florida on Sept. 30 and spend time on Merritt Island during fall break. However, due to flight cancellations and the late reopening of the airport, her family was unable to secure a flight until Oct. 2.

"When I was finally in Orlando, there were trees all over the place and there was a lot of flooding, especially on the sides of the roads," Przybylski said. Although the areas she visited experienced minor damage from Ian, Przybylski observed that "everything seemed pretty much the same."

Fellow junior Lainey Abbring, who also had to rearrange her Florida plans, noticed minor damage while there, including destruction to trees, plants and the pool screens at the Disney World Resort. In addition to Disney World, her family had plans to visit Universal Studios and witness a rocket launch from the Kennedy Space Center, which delayed the launch date due to the storm.

"My mother really wanted to see the launch so she had to call the Space Center to see if we [could] switch the dates of our tickets," Abbring said. "We thankfully were able to see the launch." She noted that, while her "experience was not greatly affected by the hurricane," many of her classmates' flights to Florida were canceled.

Near Orlando, where both Przybylski and Abbring visited, is the St. Johns River, which is slow to drain out the nearly 20 inches of rainwater that Ian brought. Two weeks after the storm first made landfall in southwestern Florida, tens of thousands of homes were still inaccessible due to floodwaters, particularly in the central region of the state.

Ian completely destroyed thousands more homes to the south and west, including the Fort Myers Beach condo where Ava Nix (12) and her family have vacationed eighteen times over the years. During fall break, Nix instead visited family in Boston, Massachusetts. The storm's aftermath has left Nix without winter break or spring break plans.

"Now, like all families that had this plan, there is panic as to where to go, especially because so many people travel there every spring," Nix commented.

The condo, owned by a family friend, was badly damaged, with the storm surge and flooodwaters overtaking cars and buildings in the streets. Nix and her family kept track of the hurricane's progress through those who had evacuated the condo to higher grounds.

"Fort Myers Beach is a charming, old, city with character.

Just like my family, I know many people were affected by this tragedy. I cannot imagine how terrible an event [like] this [affected] people who live there year-round,"

Nix said. "There is an astounding amount of damage done in this beautiful city that will take years and years to fix. I am so grateful to have had many memories here but it is disheartening to hear about the damage, especially as someone who loves the city as much as I do."

GRAPHICS BY MADELINE PHUONG

Poetry Out Loud

written and designed by
ISABELLA AMBROSE

Every year, schools across the country participate in a national contest, Poetry Out Loud. Poetry Out Loud is a competition where students choose two poems to recite. The competition begins at a high school level and continues all the way to the national level.

"Absolutely anyone can participate in Poetry Out Loud," said senior Madeline Phuong. Students interested in poetry, literature and other English-related topics may take interest in the competition. Even students who like theater and public speaking may enjoy competing.

In order to compete at the school level, students must recite two poems. Both must be selected from Poetry Out Loud's anthology and be less than 25 lines, and one must be from the 20th century. An anthology is simply a published list or collection of poems, and Poetry Out Loud's anthology can be found on its website.

In addition to a recitation competition, Poetry Out Loud also has a writing competition called Poetry Ourselves. Stella Grable (11) competed in this competition last year. Poetry Ourselves starts at a state level and competitors are unaware of their competitors' poems. Grable said that "reciting poetry and writing it are two incredibly different feats." She believes that writing poetry takes much more involvement than just reciting it which helped to further encourage her love of poetry.

After winning Homestead's Poetry Out Loud competition, Phuong competed at the state level. She said that her experience at the state level was abnormal due to the competition being virtual, but it was still enjoyable nonetheless. She was able to practice with a spoken word poet and receive insight on her poetry. To Phuong, Poetry Out Loud takes poetry beyond the classroom. While most English classes do not push poetry beyond an academic level, Phuong believes that reciting poetry for the competition "brings it alive."

If you are interested in competing, either visit Poetry Out Loud's website or contact Mr. Beer at jbeer@sacs.k12.in.us for upcoming details and meetings.

PHOTO COURTESY OF: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

Mr. Beer: Teacher of the Year Finalist

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT & ALESSIA PASSONI

Homestead High School English teacher Jason Beer was chosen as a top three finalist for the Indiana Teacher of the Year award.

On October 5, the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) announced Tara Cacanower, a history teacher from Bluffton High School, as the Indiana Teacher of the Year.

Though he did not win, Beer said, "It was a true honor getting as far as I did. I still hold that the best part of all this was receiving the kind and supportive words from students and colleagues."

Started in 1952 by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Teacher of the Year program is designed to "inspire, rejuvenate, and celebrate the teaching profession by recognizing outstanding teachers from across the state," according to the Indiana DOE.

For over 60 years, the state of Indiana has annually recognized a teacher for excellence in his or her field.

With more than 60,000 teachers employed in Indiana, winning this award is an outstanding achievement. After being selected as their school district's Teacher Of The Year, teachers across the state submitted an application that was reviewed and scored.

The teachers with the 25 highest-scoring applications moved on for another round of scoring, through which the ten finalists were chosen.

From the thousands of teachers across the state who also went through this selection process, Beer and nine others were chosen as finalists.

"For top ten I went down to Indianapolis. I had to do 2-3 minutes of prepared remarks... and then they had a half hour of questions where they asked about different things in my class," explained Beer.

Finally, after this interview process, the winner is chosen.

The Indiana DOE states that to be eligible for the award, teachers must "utilize innovation to create learning experiences within and beyond the classroom."

In his unique class, Travel Writing, Beer works with students to write about local travel experiences, encouraging them to explore their community by meeting new people and trying new things. He described the writing genre as "creative nonfiction" that combines "narrative story-telling with research." Another class of Beer's, Novel and Screenwriting, was offered for the first time this school year.

Beer said that in the class, students pick "either a novel or a screenplay" to work on throughout the course of a semester.

While writing a novel or screenplay in this class, students learn how authors create and publish their works.

"We learn the process. From how you actually come up with an idea, how you develop that idea... and then if you were finished how would you actually go about getting that published," explained Beer.

Homestead principal Susan Summers believes that Beer's "greatest impact on students is that he has provided many of them with opportunities to share their talents and ideas with audiences outside of the classroom."

One of these special opportunities is a project in Travel Writing, where students write about the downtown area of Fort Wayne, which, as Summers shared, "has resulted in student work being published in a local magazine."

Another factor that the DOE looks for in candidates is a classroom environment and teaching style that keeps students engaged.

Beer said that in his classroom, he strives to "create an environment where for at least a chunk of their day, [his students would] rather be doing this than not doing this."

He also expressed his hope that his students "get a sense that... I love what I do and that I care for you as a person."

This hope is reflected in the one-on-one time that Beer spends with his students in class, helping them to improve their writing and expand their thinking. Summers also explained that "as a frequently published author, Mr. Beer leads by example, [encouraging] his students to strive for excellence and seek out these types of opportunies."

The state-wide recognition of the outstanding work that Beer does at Homestead reflects onto the Southwest Allen County School district as a whole.

"Mr. Beer's recent honor...has given us the opportunity to celebrate another example of the amazing teaching and learning that happens in this district," said Summers.

"This information is being received by members of the public that might not otherwise have heard about all the great things our teachers and students do each and every day."

Mr. Beer's Books

The above books are a collection of some of Beer's "favorite books as well as some of the most influential." Beer's love for reading is something that he takes outside of the classroom. "Usually my reading combines personal interests with current writing projects," explained Beer. Because he has been writing "a coming of age story," Beer shared that he has "read several such books over the past few years."

ON THE TRACK

Kenny Austin (12) walks across the track with his parents to join the rest of the Homecoming court.

Anthony Gery (12) interviews Nada Dahouk.

HOME

The Homecoming court on the track during halftime. Left to right: Nada Dahouk, Alejandro Tinnell, Adrienne Creech, Stella Boothman, Kenny Austin, Gina Zirille, Hilary Adams, Anthony Gery, Evie Bottoms, Carson Heckman, Molly Stock, Grant Leeper, Bryce Yoder, and Zachariah Zolman.

COURT

Seniors Alejandro Tinnell and Nada Dahouk win Homecoming King and Queen during halftime.

GAME

Homestead High School's football team plays a close game against Northside High School, losing 49 to 50.

COMING

designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

The Spartan student section shows their support for Riley Children's Hospital by dressing in all red.

IN THE STADIUM

Don't forget to check out the Homecoming page in the upcoming 2022-2023 yearbook!

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CATHERINE AHLERSMEYER
GRAPHICS BY GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

ADDRESSING DEMOCRACY IN STUDENT GOVERNMENT

written by
MADELINE PHUONG & AZALEA ORSINI
designed by Madeline Phuong

As the common people leave the grounds to continue their daily lives, a group elected by the people gather in a grand room, stoically seated in rows and primed for intense discussion and decision-making. The speaker commences the session, and the committees are now ready to plan.

This took place not on Capitol Hill or in the Indiana Statehouse, but at Homestead High School in room 303, where over 30 elected Student Government representatives gather weekly to discuss the pressing issues of high school life: Homecoming, winter Semi-Formal, Prom, the annual Blood Drive and service projects. Beyond these social and community events, Homestead's Student Government also plays an integral role in the formation and financing of clubs.

As with any governing body, Homestead's Student Government is facing a glaring issue: lack of participation by its constituency, i.e. the student population. Student engagement was a focus of HHS In Depth reporter Michelle Obioma's September 23 feature on Student Government. This absence of participation became clear when the grade-level competition Survival of the Spartans (SOTS) was rescheduled to October 25 due to too few entries. On September 28, the day prior to the new entry deadline, the competition had no additional teams. After speaking with Student Government sponsor Justin Peeper and observing a student government meeting, the cause of this issue became more apparent.

"We're somewhat rebuilding here," Peeper said. "We couldn't do a lot of things last year because of Covid. This year, we're back to things being a lot more normal." Peeper had just finished advising the sophomores on budgeting for Semi-Formal, which he clarified was not paid for by the school. Representatives had the responsibility of planning decorations, designing the ticket and picking the theme for the dance. Notably, this is the first Semi-Formal and the first SOTS since 2019. Peeper said that his goal is to increase participation by the student body, which is why Student Government delayed SOTS until after fall break.

Senior Class President Anthony Gery echoed this sentiment in his goal for the year: "Trying to get everybody involved." Having been a part of the elected body since his freshman year, Gery witnessed the growth of the Class of 2023 section from a "small group" of individuals to hardworking seniors who exhibit school pride and who "want to make Homestead better." Gery stressed the importance of widespread participation to keep this momentum going. He also noted that the increased involvement in Homecoming Week and the success of the Red for Riley fundraiser are promising signs for the school year.

"There's a level of trust that Student Government has to put in the people outside of Student Government to spread the information and participate," Gery said. He encouraged greater engagement not only by students but by Student Government representatives themselves. As president, he helped break down the class section divides during weekly meetings, inviting representatives of all grade levels to collaborate in planning Homecoming and other events.

"Everyone just needs to be a little more open in Student Government and we'll be able to plan a lot of things easier," Gery said.

These are not the only changes that Student Government has been making. In addition to SOTS, two Student Government events are being brought back in the first semester alone: The Blood Drive and the

Sophomore Class representatives discussing Semi-Formal at the Sept. 28 Student Board Meeting.

PHOTOS BY AZALEA ORSINI
GRAPHICS BY MADELINE PHUONG

November 2 School Board Forum, which Gery will lead. Despite participation in SOTS being half of what it was prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the event is scheduled to go forward to begin reinstating Homestead traditions.

Students such as Ella Nix (12) are taking notice of these differences. Nix remarked that this year's Student Government seems to be "more engaged and more focused" than in years past. She also appreciates the effort that Gery and his fellow representatives have made to ask for student opinions via social media.

"They do a good job being personable and understanding what the students want," Nix said. "They're listening to the people and being more democratic."

Nix recognized the role of the Covid-19 pandemic in lessening student awareness of and involvement in Student Government events. In regard to student engagement, she remained optimistic that the class representatives would "bring back the hype we had freshman year."

An anonymous junior had contrasting opinions on Student Government: "They don't communicate with anyone. They don't ask anybody for outside opinions. A good Student Government is supposed to represent the student body, and they don't have a conversation with anyone." The junior claimed that the representatives only request opinions from close friends, with minimal exceptions. Another anonymous junior shared this sentiment, pointing out that "nobody's educated on what they do. We just vote for our friends." Senior class Treasurer Yeyoon Song said that Student Government "hasn't considered" reaching out for student feedback.

Peeper acknowledged that student body engagement goes beyond social and community events; student feedback is equally vital in terms of Student Government elections. In total, Student Government has 14 positions for each class section, making a body of 56 student representatives in total. Each grade has a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as 10 representatives. The four officer positions are elected through plurality voting, where the candidate with the most—but not necessarily the majority of—votes wins the office. Representatives are elected in the same manner on one ballot, and the top 10 candidates win a position. Students passing all their classes are eligible to run for representative, Treasurer, Secretary or Vice President positiona at any grade level, regardless of prior experience.

Peeper stated that through reelection, "the voters symbolically say they're happy with what the person is doing to a certain extent." For the senior class, Student Government officers and representatives have changed with each election, accompanying changes in those running for a position and the students' voting preferences. Clearly, students are taking interest in who represents them. In the recent election of freshman class officers and representatives, 67.8% of ninth graders voted—a markedly greater percentage than the typical voter turnout for national midterm elections.

Hope is not lost for democracy at Homestead. "We're headed in the right direction," Gery said. While Student Government has no public proposals for increasing student engagement, they are excited to see Homstead traditions return to their former glory.

Junior Class representatives discussing Prom at the Sept. 28 Student Board Meeting.

Democracy 2022:

Stephanie Veit

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

Stephanie Veit currently works at the Fort Wayne International Airport in business development and manages the real estate the airport owns for development.. Previously, she worked for 3 ½ years at Hagerman Construction and 16 years at 3 Rivers Credit Union in Finance. Veit's priorities as a board member would be "managing infrastructure and growth for the district, increasing parent involvement and increasing community involvement." Veit explained, "In the state of Indiana, school boards do three things: hire and fire superintendents, manage infrastructure and change policy. I think I could manage construction and growth. I would also focus on advocating for more parent involvement, preparing students for post-secondary options, emphasis on companies."

When it comes to SACS's growth and construction, Veit said, "Administrators aren't real estate or construction people. We'll really have to rely on experts and the board. I think I can bring that to the table, as I've worked in construction. The board will need to be transparent."

When asked about mental health, Veit said, "This is a big one for me. I'm really going to be an advocate for mental health professionals in our schools. We need professionals in our schools, in high school at minimum. Mental health is a problem in our community, state and society. Parents need to be super engaged, and if we don't have someone in the district in the thick of things, we don't have counselors with resources. It needs to happen then and there, not later. I'm going to be a huge advocate for mental health care in the schools."

Nationwide, school boards are facing accusations of schools cutting parents out of their children's education. Veit's stance on parental involvement is that "parents should be involved in every part of their child's education. Right now, every parent has access to the curriculum through Canvas. It's not up to teachers to pass information out, and we have opt-out policies. I think parents should be involved and if they're not happy, talk one-on-one to teachers. I just think parents need to be involved and open and honest and transparent with teachers instead of going to the board first."

In the political realm, when it comes to LGBTQ+ issues, Veit said, "I'm not an educator, so I don't know how or what that should be taught or not taught. Education is not the world that I live in. I would lean on an expert and ask what the best way to address this is." She answered a follow-up question about whether she would support transgender bathrooms with, "I don't know. From an actual building/architecture standpoint, I would lean on what other schools are doing and what has/hasn't worked. I don't live in that world of those kinds of decisions. I think we need to make sure that everyone feels comfortable, I don't know the need/want without asking for experts. I would ask people that have done it and ask students with those needs in the district."

Amanda Tokos

Amanda Tokos currently owns and operates a franchise-brokering company, helping people across the country get into business. For the past 12 years, she owned and operated five businesses, four of which she no longer owns. Prior to that, she worked in law enforcement on the court's side in probation for about 15 years. Tokos' priorities as a board member would be to "make sure that programs are helping our children, and that our funding is being used in accordance with the guidelines. I would like to have a returned focus on academics rather than ideological content and politics, and I would also like to empower our teachers by restoring some level of discipline in the classrooms."

When it comes to SACS's growth and construction, Tokos said, "It's important that we fully understand the projections and be able to meet the needs of the students in our community. Anytime we have growth, there'll be a little bit of pain, but as long as we're listening to students, faculty and constituents, then we'll find solutions that will adequately appease the majority of people."

When asked about mental health, Tokos said, "I believe that the school oftentimes is put in a position where they become aware of

Meet the SACS School Board Candidates

mental health issues with students, and as a result, they have to respond, which is nothing new. Teachers have done an amazing job for quite some time working with children from all sorts of backgrounds but they're not mental health counselors, and they should not be required to assume the responsibility of a counselor." She also said, "I was happy that SACS extended Crosswinds' contract so that students would have the opportunity to get mental health care for free. I do not believe that schools should be doing mental health assessments or that it should be a platform for medication, management and other more in-depth mental health treatment."

Tokos' stance on parental involvement is that "parents have a fundamental right and responsibility to be involved with their children's education. I believe that the schools have a responsibility to provide the parents with any information related to the education of their child. I think that we could definitely find a better way to do things to make everyone happy. My intent would never be to burden and overwhelm teachers or admin by micromanaging their profession."

In the political realm, when it comes to LGBTQ+ issues, Tokos said, "If employees of SACS cannot figure out how to be inclusive of all students and teach them all with the same level of respect and value without glorifying sexual orientation, then perhaps they're in the wrong profession. I don't believe that schools have any right whatsoever to promote or affirm any child's sexual orientation. This is a very serious topic, and I think that by allowing this ideological-based practices into our schools, we are going to harm our children. Students should not know the sexual orientation or political affiliation of their teachers. And adults should not be discussing sexual orientation with minors." She answered a follow up question about whether she would support transgender bathrooms with, "No, no, and no."

Kim Moppert

Kim Moppert is a former SACS teacher, having taught grades 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 as well as gifted grades. She took a 15-year hiatus to open a bookstore, during which time she served on the National Board of American Booksellers for Children. She also served on Bishop Luers school board for six years. Moppert's priority as a board member would be to "understand the best educational research, so I can be more persuasive about some things. The most important thing is to do what's best for kids and teachers." Moppert also said, "For the most part, you have business people on the board but to have someone that is actually in education and loves to learn and research about what's best for kids, I think that's a skill set that school boards need."

When it comes to SACS's growth and construction, Moppert said, "I don't know that as a board member, you can address this on your own. We have been behind and are crammed to the rafters at Covington. There would be a push to get things going for younger kids."

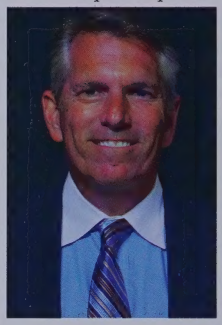
When asked about mental health, Moppert said, "Parents should be involved with their child's mental health, absolutely. As an educator, you have children in your classroom from all different backgrounds. If there's an issue, you can discuss it as a class. Crosswinds did a wonderful job with a student I had. I think we're doing a pretty good job of trying to help students, and as far as parents, my child is my child and I wouldn't want anything happening that I wasn't aware of."

Moppert's stance on parental involvement is that "parents always have the ultimate power. You can always decide to send your child somewhere else. As a teacher, you have to respect parents in the sense that when you have a class full of children, there's a wide variety of what they know. Walk the line and remember your boundary; don't overstep into parenting. I just have felt that this was always important. If something is going on, as a parent, I would want to know about it. Board meetings are a place to healthily share your opinions, but start with the teacher, go to the principal, then the school board. You have to be proactive as a parent."

In the political realm, when it comes to LGBTQ+ issues, Moppert said, "I think they have taken this LGBTQ and gender identity and politicized this, which is not fair to students who might have been gender dysphoric. Gender dysphoria only affects 1/100th of a percent of people. Politicizing this is doing a disservice to students. I think parents would have to agree to pronoun/name changes. I do not want to make it a political issue, because it's a human issue." She answered a follow up question about whether she would support transgender bathrooms with, "Transgender would have to have gone through parents. There are enough bathrooms in the school that don't have a gender attached, so that could be a compromise. Compromise works but not until parents have been through the steps."

DOUG COPLEY

Doug Copley is a current school board member, serving since late 2021 after the resignation of a board member. He has lived in SACS for 25 years and is the CEO of a national solar construction company. If re-elected, Copley's priorities are "school safety; small class sizes help to attract people; raise money and perform construction on time and on budget, as well as mental health and safety." Copley "loves the school corporation and takes great pride in the community."



When it comes to SACS's growth and construction, Copley said, "My company does school construction around the country, which loans itself to understanding how to control costs and handle construction intelligently. We have to be strategic in how we build: do we add onto Summit, do we use land we own west of Covington or do we purchase land south of 24? If we have to purchase land, it's extremely costly— we want to be able to look at the taxpayer and say that we're responsible with their money." Copley also said that "the board has been able to squash change order requests at Homestead and capped prices on the construction project, led by a team consisting of Brad Mills, Mark Gilpin, Park Ginder, Mark Snyder, the key contractors and me. My construction background is a big advantage."

When asked about mental health, Copley said, "It keeps me up at night. After Uvalde, I'm constantly thinking about it. The referendum is a big part of that—it will help on the mental health side by keeping 43 teachers and adding 26 more personnel including teachers, School Resource Officers and counselors. It is really important to be able to address that mental health issue early and quick. We are a leader around the state in so many areas, and we can be on the cutting edge of mental health and school safety. The biggest thing is the mental health side, where we need parents to monitor their kids on-line activity. The passing of the Yes for SACS referendum is as important as anything we do."

Copley's stance on parental involvement is that "I don't want to see parents telling teachers how to teach a class, but I want parents to be involved and have input. For instance, do we have enough technology, too much technology, more or less textbooks, would the community support new construction and do we have enough discipline. I also don't want to limit parents' access, and I think we should do things like stream board meetings. Having transparency and parent input is how we get better. We have to adapt and adjust to parents, teachers and students."

In the political realm, when it comes to LGBTQ+ issues, Copley said, "I think it comes back to listening. Each school corporation has given their opinions on this. We listen to our customers, who are our parents: saying we don't want non-traditional historical teaching and gender ideology in classrooms. We're not going to keep everyone in a bubble, but we're not going to advocate and support teaching that at an early age. Especially early age groups, and even middle school." He answered a follow-up question about whether he would support transgender bathrooms with, "Sometimes someone is legitimately going through this, but 9/10 times it's a guy clowning around with their buddies. We don't want to spend time and money adding bathrooms that are open to all kids. I believe we need to listen to the majority of parents who are telling us we need to have traditional values in SACS."

DAWN FRITTS

Dawn Fritts could not be reached for comment.

SACS REFERENDUM

Another important item on the ballot this November is the SACS referendum. The referendum is a vote to reapprove or not reapprove the 15 cent rate per $100 home assessed value. Renewing the referendum provides funding to retain 43 classroom teachers, two guidance counselors, and one school police officer. It would also provide funding to add 14 classroom teachers, seven guidance counselors/social workers, two school police officers, one central office administrator, one support staff, and one alternative school administrator/counselor. All four candidates interviewed (Tokos, Copley, Veit, and Moppert) support the 2022 SACS Referendum. More information about the referendum can be found on the SACS website under the "Referendum" tab.

THE FORT'S FALL FAVORITES

written and designed by
KAIYA CRONKHITE

Over fall break, if you stayed in Fort Wayne, you may have taken some time out to explore some autumn activities. A popular destination for many people was the Amazing Fall Fun Festival, which took place in Waterloo, was ongoing throughout October. The Fall Fun Festival has a giant corn maze pumpkin patch and hayrides, which are fun for all ages and perfect for a family trip. Keenart dairy farm is another family style favorite which has a lot of similar activities as the Fall Festival, however it's much larger and has more activities like a corn pit and pumpkin launching. Another Fort Wayne activity that most people have tried at least once is the Black Forest and Haunted Castle. If a fear factor experience seems like a fun way to spice up an fall weekend, head downtown and give it a try. Fair warning: the lines are fairly long on average, but there are VIP passes available if lines just aren't for you. Similar to the Haunted Castle is the Haunted Jail, located in Columbia City. The Haunted Jail lines are typically shorter, and it is rated as one of the top five haunted places in the country. If fake scares just aren't your thing, the Bell Mansion runs tours all October and early November, including flashlight and lantern tours. The Bell Mansion is said to be a real haunted house and is located near the original Old Fort downtown. If you are interested in being part of an annual Fort Wayne tradition, Fright Night and the zombie walk happen every year downtown on October 15th. The walk begins at 5:30 pm and is viewed and participated in by thousands of people every year. If this sounds interesting to you, be sure to mark your calenders for next season.

The Salem Witch Trials

written by
HANNAH SHAW & MELODY THRASHER
designed by Hannah Shaw

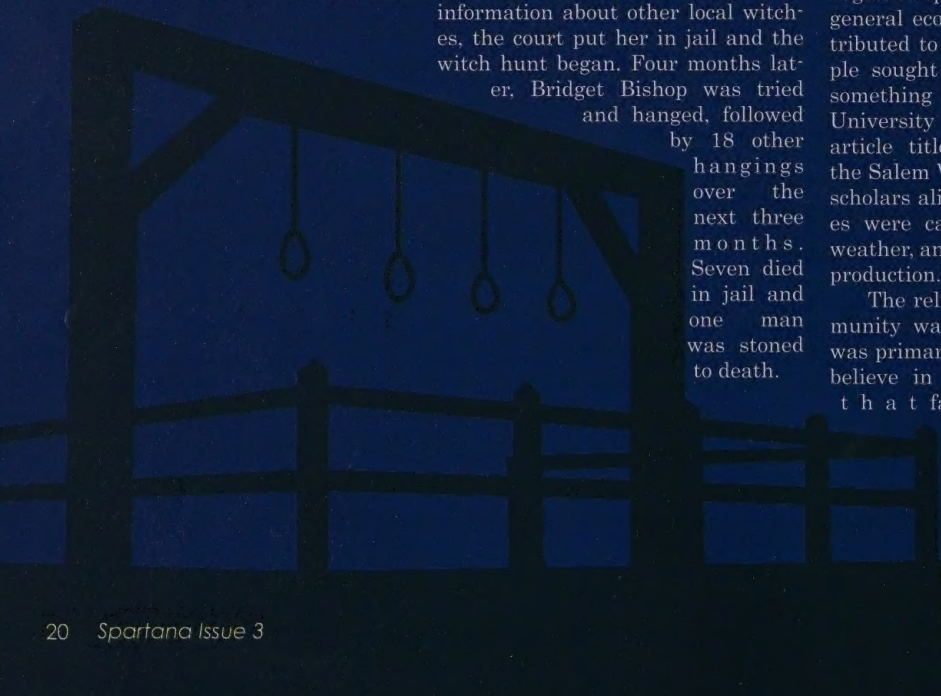
Salem, Massachusetts has been the go-to setting for Halloween-themed media for decades. Whether that be something as silly as "Hocus Pocus" or as dark as "The Crucible," Salem has become iconic. The town's magnetism towards spooky stories comes from a rather grim splotch on history: The Salem Witch Trials.

In 1692, Elizabeth Parris and Abigail Williams, the daughter and niece of the town's minister Samuel Parris, began exhibiting increasingly strange behavior. The pair experienced episodes including uncontrollable screaming, violent movements and an unexplained pinching sensation. The town doctor proclaimed that they were bewitched and soon after, more cases of this bizarre "disease" began appearing in Salem.

The afflicted girls accused three women—Tituba, Sarah Good and Sarah Osborn—of witchcraft, and in late February, they were arrested. While appearing in court, both Good and Osborn denied any responsibility for the childrens' condition. Tituba, however, confessed to practicing witchcraft and claimed that there were other witches in league with herself.

Tituba was an enslaved woman working in the Parris household who watched over the Parris children. Prior to the accusations, the girls were playing a fortune-telling game in which egg whites dropped into a cup of water supposedly formed a shape. The two saw the shape of a coffin appear. Although Tituba had not taken part in the fortune-telling game, she tried to help the girls by feeding them a "witchcake." Her actions angered Minister Parris, who beat her. This may have lead to her court confession.

Once Tituba had confessed to working with the devil and promised information about other local witches, the court put her in jail and the witch hunt began. Four months later, Bridget Bishop was tried and hanged, followed by 18 other hangings over the next three months. Seven died in jail and one man was stoned to death.



What Really Happened

After interviewing people at both the Witch Trials Memorial and the Salem Witch Museum in Massachusetts, the causes of the Witch panic became more clear. Sara Moore, associate professor and chairperson of Salem State University, and Rachel Christ-Doane, Salem Witch Museum Director of Education, gave insight into the many factors that contributed to the accusations of witchcraft, the violence and the trials. These all stemmed from fear and anxiety from various political and Puritan perspectives.

Doane claimed that "what was really happening was a lot of anxiety in the community." In the year of 1692, the citizens of Salem faced one of the coldest winters ever recorded. In the face of record low temperatures, diseases and hunger, citizens of Salem began to speculate. Crop failure and general economic hardship also contributed to the accusations and people sought out scapegoats, needing something to blame. According to a University of California, Berkeley article titled "Did Weather Cause the Salem Witch Trials?", "popes and scholars alike clearly believed witches were capable of controlling the weather, and therefore, crippling food production."

The religious context of the community was also influential. Salem was primarily Puritan. The Puritans believe in predestination, meaning that fate is decided prior to one's birth. Doane went on to say that the Puritans fully believed that "from the moment you're born, you're either destined for heaven or you're destined for hell, and there's nothing that you can do to change

that." She explained that this notion "certainly plays into when people are being accused of witchcraft," because of the Puritan's black and white views of predestination. Their view that evil was a physical presence in the world made them quick to believe the worst, causing a sense of heightened anxiety surrounding what they believed was unusual behavior in the community. At the time, anything potentially affiliated with the devil made the Puritans extremely fearful, including witchcraft.

With this, there was "some tension about who belonged in the church and who didn't belong in the church." During this time there was a religious and political establishment called the Half-Way Covenant. This established rule meant that a citizen could be baptized outside of the church but still be a part of the church community. There were many political disagreements about this, which led to rivalries, and eventually led to the many accusations of witchcraft.

The Court System & Reform

Additionally, a shaky court system heavily conributed to the death of the accused innocents. During the late 17th century in Salem, there was a lack of adequate leadership. When the governor's wife was convicted of witchcraft, numerous other, and likely false, accusations were put to rest. Surrounding communities were also skeptical of Salem's use of spectral evidence—evidence based on a witness's dream—as reason for conviction and this also led to the decline of the trials.

The court system at the time relied heavily on the use of this form of evidence that, in modern courts, would have violated the hearsay rule. This rule prevents the use of statements made outside of the court as evidence in the trial. A majority of the evidence used in the witch trials, including spectral evidence, would have qualified as hearsay. Additionally, modern-day America operates under the idea that a person is innocent until proven guilty, but in 1692 the women were automatically assumed to be guilty and, because of the absence of the hearsay rule, unable to be proven innocent.

An unfortunate truth is that once the trials were put to an end, those who were convicted remained in jail if they couldn't pay off their debt—regardless of whether or not they were guilty. With the current facts, it is likely that most who were convicted were innocent. According to Doane, even the Salem court mentioned that some potentially innocent people were convicted with spectral evidence.

Modern-Day Salem

Salem today contrasts vastly from its 17th-century past. Ironically, the town now has a prominent Wiccan community that believes in a very "earthy, natured based," and "pagan focused" way of living. There are historical buildings like the Witch House, originally home to Judge Jonathan Corwin—a judge involved with the witch trials—and museums like the Salem Witch Museum, which tells the story of the Salem Witch trials. Additionally, organizations like Voices Against Injustice continue to work towards advocating for cases of social injustice, like what happened in 1692.

spartan spotlight

Indiana Oddities

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

The Beast of Busco

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Fulk Lake and its surrounding property, located between the boundaries of Madden and McDuffee Road in Churubusco, Indiana, are currently uninhabited and for sale. But approximately 73 years ago, it was the home of a ten-foot long, 250-500 pound turtle. This is the Beast of Churubusco, colloquially known as the Beast of Busco. The town and The News-Sentinel named the turtle Oscar, after the original owner of the property.

The beast was first discovered haunting the premises in 1898 when farmer Oscar Fulk noticed the creature lurking in his lake and he attempted to spread the news. Unfortunately, due to a lack of physical proof, his claims were forgotten for nearly 50 years.

It would not be till July 2, 1948, when fishermen Ora Blue and Charley Wilson cast their lines into Fulk Lake, that the turtle would make his grand reappearance.

On remembering his experience, Blue said that he saw Oscar's "big head sticking up" and the waves rushing away "like it was a submarine."

However, the news would only begin to spread in March of 1949, after Gale Harris, the newest owner of the property and Reverend Orville Reese spotted the beast while repairing Harris's barn roof. A Whitney clerk wrote an article in a local newspaper describing the events that occurred.

As news of Oscar rapidly spread through neighboring towns, Laura Etz, a United Press International reporter from Fort Wayne, caught wind of the story and sent it out on wire services (news agencies that send reports to media outlets). The national media immediately picked up the story, and suddenly the whole country was captivated by Oscar, bringing crowds of believers, skeptics and sightseers alike from all across the country to the small town of Churubusco.

Chuck Jones, the co-founder of the Churubusco History Center, recalled the fanaticism that surrounded Fulk Lake and Churubusco in 1949 in an interview conducted by WANE 15 news in 2021.

"It must have been a slow news year because it went viral, and that was before viral was used."

Jones was just 10 at the time, but he remembers the traffic jams, the constant airfare overhead and the sheer number of people constantly entering and leaving. The attention seemed to be too much for the small town, as Churubusco had to call in state police to manage the crowds.

"We had no privacy in our homes," Helen Harris, wife of Gale Harris, remarked, "people came by the hundreds and would walk right into the home without knocking."

In the midst of this national attention and the creation of the belief that the turtle was a hoax concocted by Gale Harris in an effort to have his turn in the media spotlight; he pledged to find proof of the massive turtle by any means necessary.

"They had traps, and hooks and tried everything to find this turtle," Jones said.

Indeed, Harris did truly try everything, including two professional divers, a homemade periscope, hooks, a female turtle, dynamite intended to blow Oscar out of the water, a 300-foot net and a large pump funded by charging people who came to visit his property.

Eventually, Harris, afflicted by debt and health problems, was forced to stop searching and auctioned his farm after declaring bankruptcy.

In a 1971 interview, Harris said, "when I laid there on the verge of death, that's when I made up my mind that this was gonna stop."

Although there is no physical proof that Oscar ever existed, he left behind a promising legacy. Churubusco is still called Turtle Town, U.S.A. and it is hard to ignore the many depictions of turtles scattered throughout the town, including a 15-foot cartoon turtle of Oscar at the entrance of its community park.

Oscar is celebrated every year through the festival Turtle Days, a four-day event consisting of a parade, face painting, boat races and the usual festival fare. What once was one man's obsessive quest to prove the existence of a massive snapping turtle is now another man's tourist attraction.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE DAILY YONDER

The Crosley Monster

Bigfoot, an ape-like creature said to inhabit the forests and woodlands of North America, has become the object of much speculation. These creatures are often rumored to wander the forests of Washington, California and Florida, but Indiana too is rumored to be home to many of these hairy humanoid creatures.

The Crosley Fish and Wildlife Area located in Jennings county has had several reports of a Bigfoot-type hominid known as the Crosley Monster.

One July night in 2006, four teenagers reported seeing the Crosley Monster around 11 p.m., first hearing strange noises and the crackling of tree branches.

Although visibility was low, the teenagers could soon make out some physical characteristics. Reportedly, the creature was of large stature with glowing (depending on which teenager was asked, this varied from yellow or a yellow-orange to red) eyes and horribly matted fur.

Corey Mullikin, one of the teenagers, said "he looked filthy," in an interview with the North Vernon Plain Dealer.

The teenagers were then allegedly chased crossing a few roads and could only stop when the neighbor's German shepherds began to bark "like crazy," Mullikin said.

Although Mullikin already experienced one brush with creatures in this area, he visited the park again on his own. This time he heard the creature scream and got a better look at its appearance.

Mullikin noticed that the creature was covered in "black fur" and ran "on all fours" in a circle around him through the woods. After both exhilarating experiences, he said he never returned to the hunting spot by himself ever again.

Although there are many anecdotes of people witnessing these seven-foot-tall hominids, there is little audio, visual or footprint evidence to be found in Indiana.

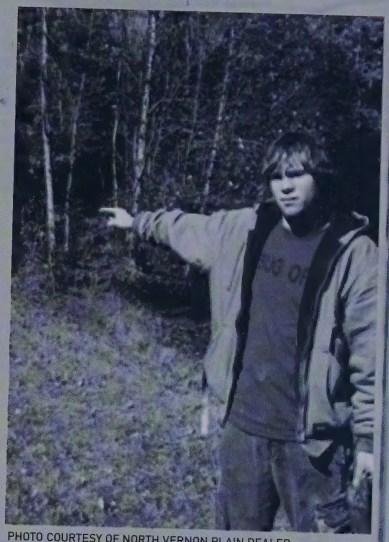


PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTH VERNON PLAIN DEALER

Big Turtle, Big Snake

A monstrous 15-foot-long snake was sighted in a graveyard west of Oxford, Indiana. It was reported in the Lafayette Courier in 1889, described as having "eyes of fire" and horns that were ten inches long. Supposedly, it feeds on corpses underneath the tombstones.

Mermaids in Vevay

According to the Akron Daily Democrat on October 1894, on a sand bar near Vevay, Indiana located on the Ohio River, two huge lizards with human features were discovered. Described as "horrible in appearance and habit," when these creatures are partially submerged in water, they look very similar to humans. These creatures were determined to be carnivores, since mussel shells, fish bones, and other animal debris had been found in their homes. The Cincinnati Enquirer also reported on these creatures and ascribed more specific physical characteristics. Notably, they were five feet in length with a "yellowish" tinge, webbed hands ending in claws and no hair but ears that "stand up like those of a dog," One can only wonder what these strange mermaid creatures were doing in coastline-absent Indiana in October of 1894. There are no modern sightings.

PHOTO COURTESY OF OHIO RIVER PARKS PROJECT

The Cable Line Monster

On the corner of County Roads 26 and 11 in Elkhart, Indiana, lives a creature known as The Cable Line Monster. There are conflicting accounts of physical appearance, varying from hairy troll to alien.

The victim of the legend varies depending on the storyteller. Some recall a young couple going home from a date, a boy asleep at the wheel, a motorcyclist speeding in the rain or a distracted father and son duo, but the bare bones remain the same: the monster always causes a car crash which causes the victim(s) to spring out of the car. The aftermath of this crash is the formation of an impression of a victim's face forming on the tree.

Both victim and tormentor haunt the premises. The impression of the victim's face is visible even in daylight. At night, a headlight on the tree is said to reveal the victim's spirit. Anytime a car drives through the intersection, the monster rattles and shakes it or even changes the radio station. People who inhabit the area have reported flickering lights and phone calls with no one on the other end.

Hallowed History

written and designed by
ELENA MORENO

When autumn comes, people in North America and Central America prepare for the fall holiday season. The harvest season always brings a kind of magic and joy to the air that people can't help but delight in. The history of these modern celebrations are vast and interesting. Today, Halloween and Día de Muertos are celebrated with costumes, candy and festivals. However, that wasn't always the case.

The modern traditions of Halloween are inspired by a number of celebrations from many different cultures. The very beginnings of this holiday can be traced back 2,000 years to the Celts (pronounced kelts) in Ireland, who celebrated their New Year on the first of November. This day was believed to be a time in which the boundaries between the worlds of the dead and living were at their weakest. The day represented the changing of seasons, from an autumn of harvest and prosperity to winter, a time often associated with death.

On October 31, the day before the New Year, the Celts celebrated Samhain (pronounced sow-in), believing that dead spirits could return to Earth on this day. They believed that the presence of these spirits made it easier for their priests to make accurate prophecies. This is also where the Halloween tradition of costumes originated, as the Celts would wear them to ward off evil ghosts.

When the Roman Empire conquered the Celtics, Romans began to incorporate their celebrations with Samhain. The common Halloween practice of bobbing for apples likely came from the celebration of Pomona, the Roman goddess of harvest whose symbol is an apple. The other holiday was Feralia, a day in late October that celebrated and honored the dead with the practices of leaving offerings on graves (a tradition also seen in Mexican culture).

Those weren't the only celebration contributions the Romans made, however. In 609 AD, Pope Boniface IV dedicated May 13 as All Martyrs' Day, though the date was later changed to November 1, expanded to include all saints instead of just martyrs, and renamed All Saints Day. Almost 400 years passed, and Christianity slowly took over Celtic lands. In an attempt to replace Samhain with a more Christianlike practice, the church dedicated November 2 as All Souls' Day, a time to honor the dead. The two were practiced in similar ways, with parades, costumes and bonfires. All Souls' Day was also referred to as All-hallowmas and All-hallows, and the day before it as All-Hallows' Eve. This eventually developed into the word we use today: Halloween.

Early Halloween celebrations in colonized America were uncommon. There were harvest festivals and celebrations in certain areas, but it was not popularized until after the mid-19th century, when Irish people fled to America to escape the Irish Potato Famine. These immigrants brought their traditions with them and the modern practices of Halloween were born. As a predecessor to trick-or-treating, people began to dress up and go to their neighbor's houses to ask for food or money. It was believed that on Halloween, women could prophesize the name of their future husband in various rituals, such as throwing hazelnuts into a fireplace or throwing apple peels over their shoulders. In the late 1800s, due to a push to make Halloween less about witchcraft and ghosts, the holiday lost most of its religious and spiritual meaning, leading to the fun, costumed Halloween that millions of people know and love today.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EMOJIPNG

Traditional sugar skull

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOD FREE PHOTOS

Offrenda (homemade altar)

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NICK AGRO OF LA TIMES

Another fall holiday with similar practices is Día de Muertos (or Día de los Muertos). It dates back to the Aztec societies of pre-colonized Mexico, originating anywhere from 500 to 1,000 years before Samhain. Originally, the celebration and festivals lasted through the entire ninth month of the Aztec calendar. The Aztecs viewed death as an integral part of life, and believed that souls had to pass nine challenging levels before reaching their final resting place, Mictlán. During the festivals, the family members of the deceased would offer food and drink to the souls to aid in their journey, which was believed to take many years. This practice continues on today, and people continue to leave their offerings on either their loved one's grave or a homemade altar called an ofrenda.

In 2022, 55% of American households are expected to celebrate Halloween. There are no current statistics for the percentage of Americans celebrating Día de Muertos, but there are people at Homestead that celebrate both of these holidays. Sra. Bailey recommends the Days of the Dead Exhibition at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art (open until November 13) for anyone interested in learning more about this fascinating holiday, as well as the Latinos Unidos Club. It meets every Tuesday, and is open to anyone wishing to learn about Latino culture. Fort Wayne has a large Hispanic population, and you're highly encouraged to visit a local Mexican restaurant like Cebolla's Mexican Grill, or otherwise support the community.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SARA WELCH

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DENVER BOTANICAL GARDENS

Fall Fashion and Fun

written by
KATELYN STYBORSKI and JULIA GAYER
designed by Katelyn Styborski

Take a deep breath and smell that gorgeous autumn air. The leaves are changing colors and with it, so are our activities. As lovely as fall can be, it's not quite as accommodating as summer. With the shorter days and colder nights, it can be hard to motivate yourself to get outside and have fun. However, we have some recommendations to have fun during fall while still being in style! T-shirts and shorts are out; sweaters and jeans are in! It's time to dive into some fall fashion and fall fun.

A big question this spooky holiday season is how people are going to spend their Halloween now that they're in high school. While trick-or-treating used to be the go-to Halloween pastime, many teens end up transitioning to going to parties as they age.

Brayla Flottemesch (12) provided her view of Halloween parties, and how they've taken over the high school social sphere. She claimed that "there is a social aspect" to trick-or-treating and to high school parties, where many avoid going out and asking for candy, and instead choose to dress up and party with their friends.

Many find it childish or embarrassing to continue to trick-or-treat. After all, there's nothing flattering about dressing up in an ill-fitting costume and parading around the neighborhood begging for treats. Whereas Halloween parties are seen as a more mature alternative: you can still dress up and have sweets, but you don't have to walk in the cold or appeal to strangers.

Flottemesch continued, "I think there isn't one that is superior, you have fun at both." Trick-or-Treating with your friends can be just as fun as going to a party, and people shouldn't be shamed for wanting to dress up and get free candy.

To those who are still hesitant about trick-or-treating, there are many other fun alternatives to celebrate Halloween. Both Hannah Groeneweg (12) and Catherine Ahlersmeyer (12) recommended enjoying some Halloween candy while watching some Halloween classics, like "Hocus Pocus" or "The Nightmare Before Christmas." Flottemesch seconded these ideas, and also suggested dressing up and handing out candy with your friends.

No matter how you decide to spend your Halloween, the important part is to be safe and have fun. Whether trick-or-treating or going to a party, Halloween is a time for humorous haunts and spooky celebrations, and you deserve to do it in style!

Equally important to enjoying your Halloween is ensuring you look your absolute best during fall. When you think of fall, you think of the colors, the atmosphere and the fashion. For potential outfits, stick with pale purples, reds, yellows and oranges for the colors. They help to hammer home that fall feeling and help absorb yourself in the season. Plus, try mixing any yellows and oranges with solid black. Black can be a very versatile color and can rhelp to tie any outfit together, even if you are feeling a bit iffy about it.

Now, while a lot of fashion is designed for warmer weather, you can still look great when the temperature begins to drop. Colder weather means it's the perfect time for sweaters. Sweaters are an essential part of fall fashion and look fabulous if done right. Michelle Obioma (12) explained that some of her favorite articles of clothing to wear during fall are "cute sweaters."

Another idea would be to go for a single color outfit. It can be difficult to decide which color works with which, and what would compliment the other, so a simple solution is just to go monochrome For example, a scarlet cardigan with a red top and pants or a beige dress with matching socks would go excellent. Plus, a comfy sweater accompanied by other clothing of the same color would both make you look great but also feel snug.

Lastly, one of the most underappreciated clothing pieces are socks. As Alejandro Tinell (12) stated, "As much as I love to wear very costume-y clothing during the spooky season, I have to hand it to fun socks." Socks can make or break your outfit. A burgundy dress might look nice, but if the socks are a vastly different color, such as neon green, then it's going to fall apart. Matching socks are critical to a nice outfit.

Whether you're enjoying Halloween or analyzing your outfit to look like a model, it's important to relax and have fun. Picking out outfits can be tricky or even stressful, but as long as you feel confident and comfortable, you shouldn't have to worry about anything.

GRAPHICS BY KATELYN STYBORSKI

HORRIFIC CINEMA

THE ORIGINAL OR THE REMAKE?

written and designed by
STELLA GRABLE

Disclaimer: These films are rated R, and therefore are not suitable for audiences under the age of 17

STEPHEN KING'S IT 1990

Most do not know that film renditions of Stephen King's IT began in 1990 with an ABC mini-series. The first half of the series follows seven pre-teens from Maine as they attempt to fight a child-killing clown. The latter section encompasses them 30 years later, as they reunite to save their town after the killer-clown returns.

Now, this film is nothing short of totally and inexplicably a cheesy 90's creation. The effects are practical and very obviously fake. The acting is not great, but it's not bad. Almost the entirety of the series is just mediocre. Overall, when looking at the film from a critic's perspective, the only astounding thing about it is the scenery used. The scenery is lush a bright; a stark contrast to what you would expect from a horror movie. Despite all of this, watchers have collectively chosen to not take the film seriously, and, when watched with an air of humor, the series is actually quite entertaining.

You cannot go into this series expecting immense horror, or even horror at all. It is better regarded as a coming-of-age story with humorous attempts at scare factor- a parody- if you will. The characters are loveable, their core traits being part of "the losers club." As mentioned before, the simple scenery of the series lends itself well, giving the watcher some incredible images to consume.

The film scored only a 63% on the Rotten Tomatoes audience score, a rating that I have to agree with. The film is slightly above average; its scenery gives it the boost it needs to have a passing grade. However, the series in total is 3 hours and 12 minutes of ambient background film. In other words, the true niche in which this film lives is the realm of "doing stuff" media. This film is enjoyable to watch only half-heartedly while not paying close attention to all of its mess-ups.

IT: CHAPTER ONE 2017

Strangely enough, Andy Muschietti's 2017 IT has arguably settled itself as more of a horror classic than the original. Maybe this is a generational take, as everyone our age remembers the terrifying trailers of contemporary IT films, however, I believe most would agree that this film has undeniably been accepted as the film adaptation of Stephen King's beloved novel.

Begin based on a novel, both the Mini-Series and this adaptation follow the same storyline. One major difference however is that Muschietti's adaptation splits the story into two parts; following the characters as children in the first film and their adulthood adventures in the second.

In regards to the first film, the cinematography is constructed quite well. It engages you in every aspect, giving you the frightening story that Stephen King wrote, as well as vivacious scenery that odes to the 1990s adaptation.

Interestingly enough, Muchietti did not stylize the film as dark and muted but instead took the route of embodying childhood innocence. The film is filled with vibrant colors and genuine banter. The film does a fantastic job of balancing out the chilling moments with humorous ones.

I use the word "chilling," not unknowingly. Most do not regard this film for its horror factor and instead view it simply as a coming-of-age film. The idea may seem terrifying, just as the novel is, but the movie directed its interest more toward creating a nostalgic world.

I believe that this film is a shining example of what a remake should be. It took the aspects from the original film that worked- the humor and landscapes- and embodied those aspects while still revamping the rest of the film. This is not a direct copy of the original and is a stand-alone piece of media that neither undermines the attempts of the original nor feels unnecessary. I think most would agree, seeing that the film rates a sizable 84% on the Rotten Tomatoes audience score.

Overall, although the film is not terrifying, much like the original adaptation, I would regard it as simply a good film. So, this could be the movie for you if you're looking for something in the realm of horror that won't have your teeth chattering.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 1974

If this film's approach to horror could be summed up into a single word it would be the following: grotesque. Made in 1974 and directed by Tobe Hooper, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre follows the supposedly true story of the brutal murders of five friends who are on the road to visit their grandfather's grave. The movie transports you back to the 70s; decked in bell bottoms and traveling the deserted streets of midsummer Texas in an unseated van, Sally, Jerry, Kirk, Pam and Franklin stumble upon a haunting town of cannibals.

The overall aura of the film is dark and gruesome. The primitive camera technology and novice angles create a sense of familiarity with the setting and characters. Throughout the film, the angles shift abruptly, and the frame shakes slightly, making a film that is reminiscent of a home video. These opinions have obviously only come in comparison to modern film, as all of this was attributed to the film's low budget and the time period; fortunately for Hooper, the advancement of contemporary film technology only adds to the intimate terror of his classic movie. Hooper aimed to create a film that makes the viewer feel as if they are truly witnessing the brutal murder of another human being, and furthermore, many scenes can be described as nothing other than absolutely gut-wrenching. After watching the film, the consensus among my peers and I was that he succeeded in his goal, creating a movie that is simultaneously astonishing in its climactic achievements, while also being on the edge of unbearable in its content.

After watching the film, Homestead seniors Alex Bohannon and Conan Snyder overall both gave the film a 5/5. Despite describing the movie as "super disturbing," "gory" and "messed up," Bohannon regarded the film highly, stating that "it's the perfect horror movie for how old it is." Snyder gave the only criticism of the film, expressing that "some of the acting is questionable," but also ended with "it's a good story."

It seems that Bohannon and Snyder's positive opinions of the film are not uncommon, as the film grossed more than $30 million worldwide, while only having an estimated $300,000 budget. Additionally, it scored an 82% on Rotten Tomatoes for the audience score with over 100,000 ratings. Furthermore, although the general public may not regard the film quite as highly as Bohannon, at only an hour and twenty-three minutes, it is definitely a worthwhile watch.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2003

In 2003, director Marcus Nispel took on the incredible feat of remaking one of the most well-known horror films of all time: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Revamped with modern technology and an estimated $9.5 million budget, this film almost lives up to the legacy of the original.

The film has essentially the same storyline as the original: a road trip of five friends going to visit a grandfather's grave. However, there is a major difference between the films, as, in the original, they pick up a deranged hitchhiker who strategically coerces them to the house in which they are slaughtered. However, in the remake, the deranged hitchhiker is not only a woman, but she shoots herself in the car. This creates a stark difference between the original and the remake, which does not necessarily contribute majorly to the plot, however, still distinguishes the remake as its own piece of media.

Somehow, the remake is less gruesome than the original. One would expect advancements in technology to lend themselves well to the film, but most viewers agree that that is not necessarily the case for The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. One of the main factors of the original that contributes to its horror is the robust and naive filming style. With the remake, they took a new direction, trying to emulate the vibe of the 70s, while using modern technology. Frankly, this attempt to emulate the original comes off as slightly lame and tacky. After watching the films, most interviewees agreed that the film would have almost been better if it had not tried so aggressively to be exactly like the original.

As was previously mentioned, what makes the original film so terrifying is the intimacy between the watcher and the characters. With the remake, there is not the same feeling of intimacy, and thus, surprisingly, its scare factor is regarded less highly than the original. This may be why the film scores much lower on Rotten Tomatoes, gaining a measly audience score of 58% with over 250,000 ratings. Additionally, critics described the film as "unnecessary" and "less scary than the original." Overall, if you're looking for a less gruesome and scarring version of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, you might want to trade the original for the remake, however, if you can handle intense gore, most agree the original is the way to go.

A Nightmare on Elm Street 1984

In 1984, Wes Craven rocked the world with his infamous horror classic: A Nightmare on Elm Street. The film follows teenager Nancy Thompson as she tries to uncover the mystery behind the shared dreams of a blade-glove-wielding serial killer that her friends and she have been having. They find out that, if they die in these dreams, they will perish in real life as well.

The film takes an unexpected approach to horror, as it does not use excessive gore, and the storyline is incapable of being interpreted as real. Wes Craven is well known for his inexplicable ability to create a cohesive and addictive "vibe," in his cinematography, and this film is no exception to that. Containing a dim and moody color palette, accentuated by an eerie soundtrack, A Nightmare on Elm Street is a stand-alone piece of media that does a fantastic job of encompassing its own world. Wes Craven is the mastermind of world-building, and A Nightmare on Elm Street is a prime example of his abilities. The film feels more nostalgic than anything; after watching it once, you become addicted to the stylistic choices of film. Many viewers agree with this take, as the film had only a $1.8 million budget, yet grossed $25.7 million worldwide. Additionally, the film has an 84% audience score on Rotten Tomatoes with over 250,000 ratings.

This more or less classic horror film is regarded as a great introduction to the genre of horror, as both the scare factor and gore are relatively minimal. When asked about this film, Snyder gave it a 5/5, stating "it's a good story," but later outlined how it was not up to par with his horror standards. Additionally, the film is just fun. It is not too serious or jaw-droppingly gruesome; it is simply a good movie that is perfect to watch with friends and family. What makes the original A Nightmare on Elm Street so fantastic is that it is the perfect teenage horror film. It is an interesting storyline with just enough spook to justify inching closer to one's teenage crush.

A Nightmare on Elm Street 2010

Samuel Bayer's 2010 remake of A Nightmare on Elm Street was nothing less than a disappointment. Although not the only contemporary adaptation of the film, this version is the only one that follows the same plot as the original, this being one of its few redeeming qualities. With a $35 million budget, the film was expected to be a fantastic reboot of a beloved horror classic. However, most agree that the film simply falls short.

Although bringing in $115.7 million at the box office, the main consensus in reviews is that this film falls into the stereotypical bad remake category. It falls short of the Wes Craven ideal, lacking the world-building abilities of the original. Similarly, the characters in the new version seem flat and stereotypical. Throughout the entirety of the film, you find yourself just wanting to scream at the dumb blonde girl on the Additionally, in the original, the obviously fictional storyline seems playful and inventive; however, in the remake, it seems lame and tacky. When asked about the remake, Bohannon gave the film a 3/5, his lowest rating of any of the films. "The original is way better than the remake," Bohannon expressed.

It seems the main issue that viewers have with this film is that it simply seems unnecessary. One reviewer on IMDB, giving the film a 5/10, stated that the film "does not add anything to the franchise." Wes Craven's rendition of the story was nothing short of phenomenal, and why mess with perfection? When making any remake, the audience is indefinitely going to compare it to the original. It was a weighty assignment to take on remaking a beloved classic, and it seems that Bayer was just not up to the task.

THE MISADVENTURES OF A SKEPTIC AND AN OUIJA BOARD

written and designed by
GAIA SPLENDORE

INTRODUCTION

To make things clear, I am a non-believer. From ghosts to ghouls to goblins, I do not believe in them. However, I do find them interesting and I'm not completely close-minded to the idea that there is something beyond our world.

So of course, I have taken on the task of exploring the legitimacy of ouija boards. If you do not know, ouija boards are boards that contain the alphabet, yes/no, and goodbye as well as a planchette (piece the players touch and the spirit moves in hopes of communicating)

As a disclaimer, I have put a strong effort to separate my own existing beliefs and doubts in hopes of articulating only the most accurate, unbiased report of my trials. The goal is to test the legitimacy of an ouija board with utmost accuracy.

Of course, I could not do this alone. Nor did I want to do it alone. So I called other Spartana staff members to action. To help combat the possible influence of bias, my team, a Supernatural Association if you will, are a healthy mix of skeptics and believers alike.

Some of us are not convinced that ghosts use Hasbro manufactured cardboard to communicate, while others swear that they have had success with them in the past, and still others fall somewhere in the middle.

And now with a troop created, a location in mind (a prairie in seemingly the middle of nowhere) and our mission clear, we set off.

TRIAL ONE

If you're reading this article, I have successfully used an ouija board and made it out alive to tell the story. Well, to be honest, trial one was not too much of a success. But that was already hinted at by the need for a trial two.

Trial one's fatal flaw was the fact that I thought that I could get a hold of a board by just buying it in a store. To be fair, Walmart's website said that they had the boards in stock.

But to make a long story short, after calling and driving and annoying employees, we failed to find a board to buy. Naturally, we turned to DIY. Using a cardboard box and a Sharpie, we had our very own ouija board. It did take us maybe two minutes to make.

However, its jankiness showed through so that the planchette did not properly slide on the board. Yet we pressed on and traveled to the destination to ask our fateful questions. We received no response after multiple attempts. We called it a day. Going home with an anticlimactic ending, no ghosts in sight and an Amazon shipment on the way, we were prepared for trial two.

Location of interview
PHOTO BY GAIA SPLENDORE

TRIAL TWO

Picking up from our failures of the previous week, we came back to our terrifying prairie with hope and a proper ouija board. It was time. Because I was trying to interview any spirits I could connect with, I had to start with getting the ghosts' consent to be interviewed.

We swirled the planchette around the board, sending positive vibes and invoking those with a particular fondness for high school newspapers.

PHOTO BY ATLAS OBSCURA

INTERVIEW ONE

Gaia : Is there anyone here?

RU6PW : Yes

Gaia : Do you consent to be a part of an interview for a school newspaper?

RU6PW : Yes

Gaia : What is your name?

RU6PW : R-U-6-P-W

Gaia : Alright... Where are you from?

RU6PW : T-K-R-B

Gaia : Hmmm... Do you want to leave now?

RU6PW : Yes

Gaia : Understandable. Goodbye.

INTERVIEW TWO

Gaia : Is there anyone here?

Erving : Yes

Gaia : Do you consent to be a part of an interview for a school newspaper?

Erving : Yes

Gaia : What is your name?

Erving : G-O-D-F-R-E-M-E

Gaia : Hmmmm... that is not very positive at all.. Are you in some form of after life?

Erving : D-E-A-D

Gaia : Oh. Well, can we get your name?

Erving : E-R-V-I-N-G

Gaia : Is there anything we should know right now?

Erving : R-U-N-F-R-O-M-S-A-T-A-N

Gaia : Hm. Why?

Erving : H-E-R-E

Gaia : Goodbye!

CONCLUSION

It's important to state that before anything else, none of us purposefully moved the planchette. We all swore to be honest and even had a designated person to both record the conversations and keep watch of the ones touching the planchette, making sure that our fingers are basically just hovering over the wood.

That being said, due to the ideomotor effect, our best behavior might be irrelevant as we could subconsciously influence the planchette's movement even if we do not think we are. The ideomotor effect is the idea that although the participants will try everything in their power not to move the planchette intentionally, they are going in with preconceived notions, influencing the movements.

However, I think that the fact that we got gibberish on our first attempt proves that we did not move with answers in mind. But on the other hand, the failure of the first attempt could push us even further to desire/influence a proper response the second time.

And although this interacton did not really change my existing ideas about the supernatural, I am grateful for everyone involved, including the ghosts.

TRUE OR TAIL:
MERMAID SIGHTINGS

written and designed by
KAITLYN FRY

Many people believe that mermaids and mermen are fake. However 99% of the ocean floor is unexplored so scientists can't even imagine what lives down there. There have also been mermaid sightings from historical figures like the pirate Black Beard and Christopher Columbus. Mermaids are also talked about in Greek mythology as Nereids, daughters of the Old Man of the Sea. Sirens, mermaids and nereids were used mostly interchangeably; they all also show the different beliefs throughout history. It is believed that sirens are a variation of mermaids and mermaids are a variation or descendants of nereids. The term "mermaid" dates back to the mid-14th century; the word "merewif" meant maid of the sea.

The first written sighting was in the second century. Pliny the Elder wrote about seeing mermaid corpses wash up onto the Coast of Gaul shores. These mermaids were covered in scales from their head to tail, not like they are usually portrayed. Pliny also reported these findings to the Governor of Gaul. When the Governor found out about this, he sent a letter to Roman Emperor Augustus about these events. Most Romans thought that the earth was alive with gods, goddesses and nymphs, so most of them thought he was talking about nymphs, from classical mythology who were represented as beautiful women that live in the mountains, forests, trees and water. In the Gulf of Cadiz, there were many reports of mermen that crept onto and sank ships at night.

Media often connects mermaids with pirates but some people don't know why. Pirates believed that mermaids would bring bad luck and sink their ships. Most people are familiar with Pirate Blackbeard yet people don't know that he mentioned mermaids in his log book. He would also warn his crew to stay away from the spots that he marked because there were mermaid sightings there. Why would mermaids hate pirates? Mermaids are thought to eat human hearts; it is also thought that they like fresh meat and pirates are easy targets. However, it also could be because people are invading their homes.

Christopher Columbus also claimed to have seen mermaids. On his voyage to find the New World, he saw three mermaids in the Caribbean Sea and one on the Coast of Africa. He said that they were not beautiful like they were portrayed because of their masculine features. He journaled about these findings, but unfortunately, his journal got lost in the sea; however, one of his peers Bartolomé de las Casas read some of his logs and wrote summaries, some word for word. Based on Columbus's descriptions historians speculate that he saw manatees but no one will know what he saw. Coincidentally, manatees are aquatic animals that belong to a group of animals called Sirenia which translates to siren.

Some Japanese soldiers during WWll who stationed at Kai Islands had claimed to see mermaids or, as they said, man-fish. These merfolk were said to have spikes on their spine and shoulders. It was around four feet and 11 inches tall, had light pink salmon-like skin, a mouth like a carp and instead of one fin it had two frog-like fins and long arms. The villagers of the islands were familiar with the creature they called it "Orang Ikan" which translates to "fish-people". Later on, other Japanese soldiers stationed there and learned that the Orang Ikan was not a joke. The soldiers had many encounters with the man-fish; they recorded different sightings and all of them described the same creature.

NEXT ISSUE: BIGFOOT

Bigfoot is a hairy apeman-like creature. Most Bigfoot sightings are declared in forested areas. In which states is it more common? Who believes in it and who doesn't?

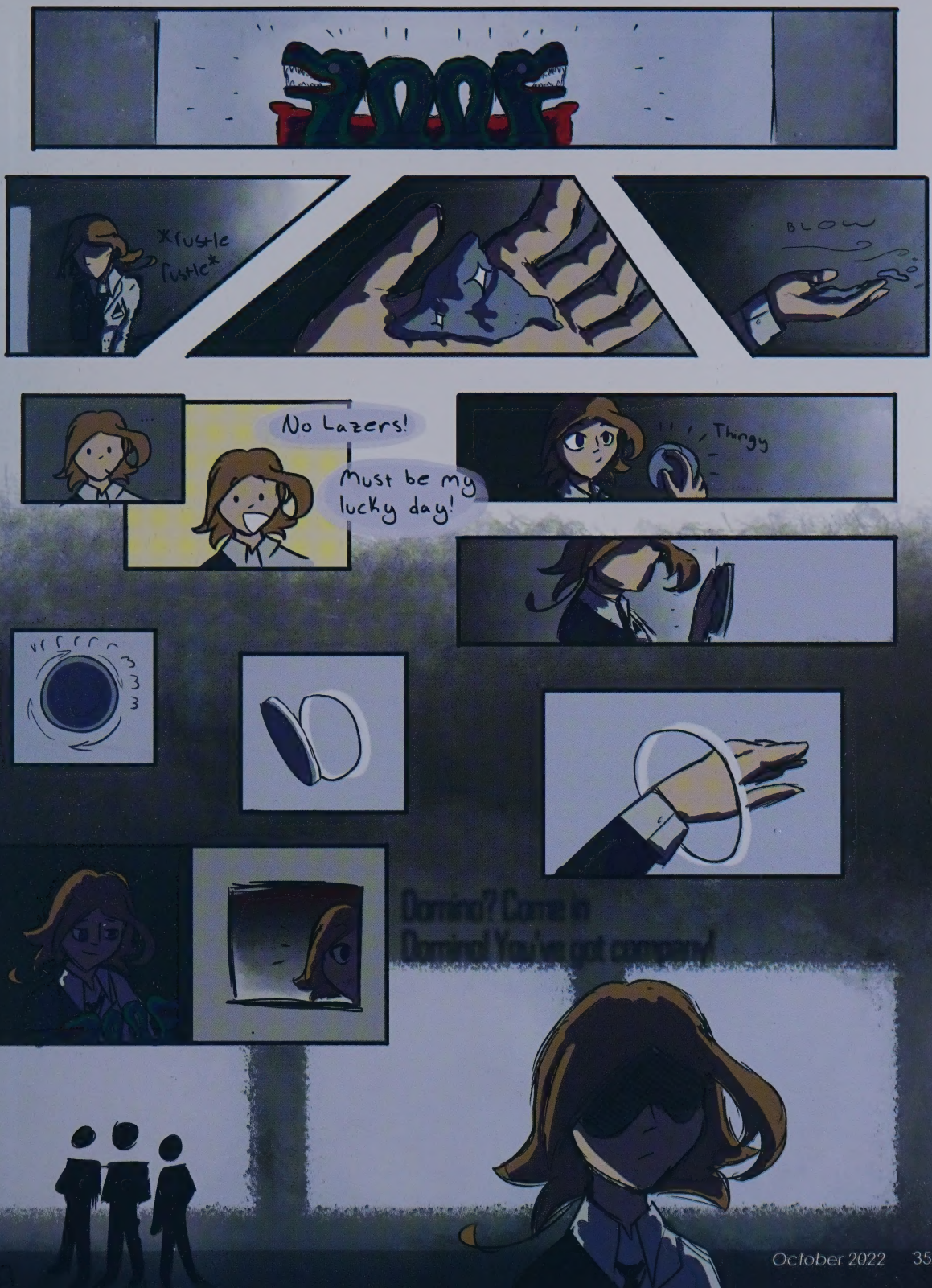
Agent Domino

Issue One

Designed by CLAIRE HOUSER
Written by GRACE HENSLEY

MUSEUM OF LONDON
...
No, but formal attire is required to keep your cover.
Laughter
I.. think you missed the mute button
Can I take this thing off yet?
No. It's absolutely necessary.
Are you sure?
Alright, fine, you can take it off. Just stay focused on the mission
But please remember this dress is very expens-
RIP
Not exactly what I had in mind...
Hey, be glad we let you take off the gown!
I can't move in this thing!
I guess it'll have to do...

Look, it's just until you find what we need.
What am I looking for again?
It's a blue... green... snake... thing
Blue, green snake thing...
...How descriptive.
It's an ancient Aztec artifact. It should be in the south wing.
I'm on my way.
Beep
That's better...
Suit
Now...
Green blue snake thing...
?
Gotcha!


ZOOF
rustle rustle
BLOW
No Lazers!
Must be my lucky day!
Thingy
Domino? Come in Domino! You've got company!

Boo.

Eye our past issues at hhsspartana.com...

the Spartana

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Cover by HANNAH SHAW
Cover Photo Courtesy of BRAELYN COOPER
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LEDITOR

(Letter From the Editors)

Dear Reader,

Indiana weather rears its ugly head as idyllic sunny days and light heat have turned to wet rain mush and bone-deep chill. The change in weather indicates that it is time that we trade in Halloween tricks and treats for gratitude.

Every November 11, the United States pays tribute to the veterans that have served their country in war or peacetime. This issue, the Spartana spotlights Homestead High School's veterans and students who plan on joining the military after high school graduation.

As well as an update on the midterm elections and a study of Homestead's fall play, the November issue of the Spartana features our favorite furry friends front and center. From the the cats that roam our streets to animals that political parties call mascots, there is an animal story for every reader. And if while perusing these pages you catch a case of the animal blues, consider turning to page 17 for a cafe featurewith a furry twist or to 32 to learn the best ways to find your very own animal companion. In our investigation of the issues that impact Homestead, Fort Wayne and beyond, we present the ups and downs of hunting; farming practices; the reality of recycling and the troubling decline of animal populations across the globe.

Explore all articles (including a continuation of our Veteran's Day article) on www.hhsspartana.com. As always, we welcome guest writers to contribute to our publication and website. Contact us at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com with questions, comments or letters to the editors.

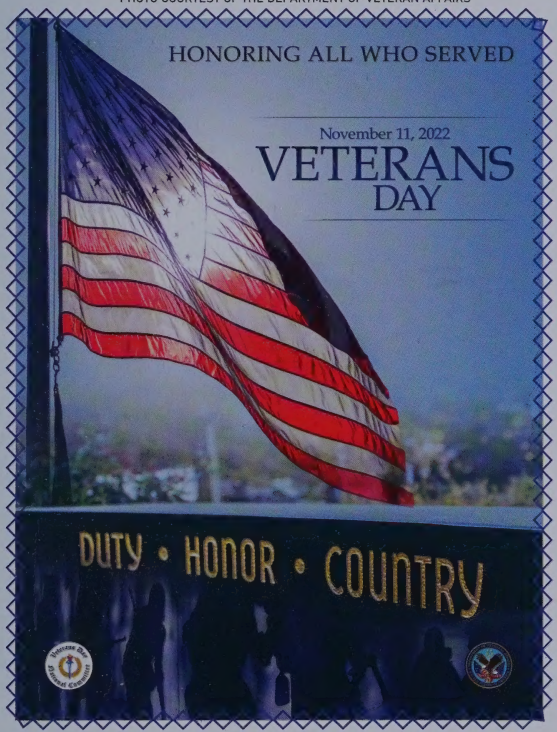
Happy Reading,
Ganga Subramanian & Madeline Phuong

Veterans Day
Honoring All Who Served

written by
ELENA MORENO

Homestead Veterans on Staff

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS



Winning poster design of the 2022 Veterans Day Poster Contest by Briana Cummings from Erie, Pennsylvania

To read more about the experiences of the veterans on the Homestead staff and future veterans of the student body, go to hhsspartana.com for an upcoming extended version of the article!

Mr. Tim Decker
Mr. Sean Holtzclaw
Mr. Don Lines
Mr. Brian McNeal
Dr. David Price
Mr. Daniel Schnaars
Mr. Robert Steverson

Future Veterans, Current Students

"My attention caught on one group of people, in particular, the military men standing off to the side. That was the first spark that ignited my dream of being in the military," Madison Edwards (11) explained. She plans to graduate one year early to work towards becoming a fighter pilot in the Air National Guard.

According to the Homestead High School profile, 2.7% of the Class of 2022 graduates planned on entering the military after graduation. Despite the benefits that military service brings, the US Army has fallen 10,000 soldiers short of its recruitment target this year.

The U.S. armed forces protect the freedoms and privileges of American citizens with their lives. Many Homestead students have parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles who are retired or currently serving. The school also employs several veterans who served in various branches of the military.

A Well-Deserved "Audience"

Reflections on Homestead's Fall Play

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

Fall—or at least fall weather—has come and gone, and so has the 2022 Homestead fall play. As the (allegedly) final show in the Homestead auditorium, the theater department selected a simple yet humorous play: "Audience".

"Audience" is a 1991 play written by Michael Frayn. The premise is simple: the actors onstage are in an "audience" watching a play. The "audience" is composed of a number of wildly over-exaggerated characters: Joan (Bethany Perkins) and Helena (Ainsley Bowman), an elderly mother out with her daughter; Charles (Zane Bray) and Amanda (Veronica Wesner), a couple engaged in a love affair; Quentin (Alejandro Tinnell) and Lee (Ayden Seabolt), a theater fan and a drama student; Merrill (Josh Moody) and Bobbie (Savannah Strack), an elderly Southern couple; Keith (Ren Moore), the playwright; Reginald (Landon Richey), Eileen (Katelyn Styborski) and Wendy (Cat Ahlersmeyer), a family out for their daughter's birthday; and Usherette (Anna Ousley), a foreign usher who struggles with English.

Photos courtesy of Nancy Myers-Scholtz

As the audience watches the play (which, in a metatheatrical twist, is the actual audience), hilarity ensues: seat changes, obnoxious coughing, people falling asleep or in love, side chats, awkward run-ins with your husband's coworker when he's on a date with a woman who is not his wife… the list goes on. Landon Richey (11) found the scene where he "sits on Eileen and Wendy because there is only one seat available" particularly funny. Savannah Strack (12) agreed and said, "It was my favorite because Michael Frayn and the actors portraying the characters took a very ordinary situation to be in and made it comical." Although the play is less than an hour, "Audience" leaves the audience satisfied with its simplistic approach to comedy.

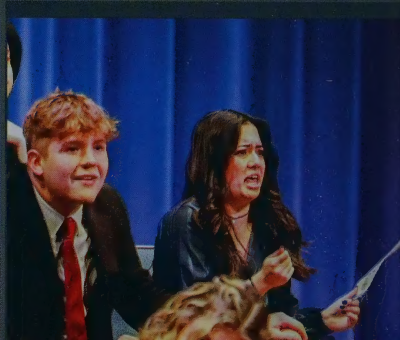
With the play over, the cast reflected on their experience. Anna Ousley (11) loved "getting to know the wonderful cast involved." She said that the cast "all sort of just clicked with each other after a couple rehearsals. This was definitely one of the best casts I've ever been a part of." Ren Moore (12) also loved being part of the cast and said, "My favorite moment of the play was standing backstage before each performance, as the cast ran in circles wishing each other luck and a good show. The comradery in this cast was so heartwarming, and I was very lucky to work with all of them."

Since this is planned to be the final performance in the old Homestead auditorium, the cast had mixed feelings on whether they lived up to that legacy. Strack believes that "we did do it justice, and hopefully, we can finally put that poor old theater to rest and move on with our lives." Alejandro Tinnell (12) agreed: "I think it was cute that for our (hopefully) last performance in that auditorium, we were the audience this time, so in that sense I think we did it justice."

On the other hand, Moore feels like "each 'Last Production' in the auditorium gets worse, because we never know if that space will be available to use. This show had to be a minimal set, since the space wasn't guaranteed, and it felt like a huge leap from the quality of 'Lend Me a Tenor' last fall." Moore believes that "'Newsies' would have been a perfect last show, but things weren't ready for the arts department….again. I think this was an amazing cast who did their best with what they were given, but we didn't do Homestead theatre department justice as the last play."

Cat Ahlersmeyer had bittersweet feelings as well: "I feel like we gave it our all and that's all you can really do. We all thought that last year's 'Lend Me a Tenor' was our final adieu to the auditorium, so it was a nice surprise to get to use the space one more time. Just one last nail in the coffin. Definitely a full circle moment, you know? From watching a motivational speaker during freshman orientation to the last curtain call, the auditorium was definitely one of my favorite parts of the school."

While it remains to be seen if this will truly be the last show in the Homestead auditorium, it's safe to say that the cast did an excellent job, so be sure to give them a standing ovation and get out to see the next Homestead production: the spring musical!



The Midterms Come to Town

"Pink Splash" for Republicans

written and designed by
AZALEA ORSINI

The midterms have finally arrived, and the country has seen some unexpected results. Typically, midterms are characterized by significant gains for the opposition party and major losses for the incumbent party. Many political pundits and pollsters believed the Republican party would experience a "red wave," meaning they would dominate the results across the country. Many comedians, journalists and political pundits such as Stephen Colbert and Phillip Elliott from Time Magazine have joked that instead of a "red wave," the Republicans encountered a "pink splash."

According to most polls and political predictions, Republicans were favored to win the House of Representatives by a larger majority than the Democrats had in the 117th Congress (2019-2023). As of Nov. 18, not all elections in the House have been called, but the Republicans have reached the minimum for a majority, 218 seats. Some notable potential losses for Republicans include right-wing star Lauren Boebert, who is winning by around 500 votes with 99% of votes counted; Alaska's Congressional District at-large was also up for election after the death of Congressman Don Young. Democrat Mary Peltola won her special election last month and had to win again to maintain her seat. She currently has a significant lead in the first round (Alaska is a ranked-choice voting state, meaning there are multiple rounds to decide the winner), and will likely achieve a narrow victory in the end, according to Politico.

The Senate has also been pretty mediocre for Republicans. The Democrats have so far maintained Senate control, and may expand their 50/50 majority (Vice President Harris issues a tie-breaking vote in the 50/50 senate, making Democrats the majority party) with one extra seat. While incumbent Republican Ron Johnson won his race against Democrat Mandela Barnes with a narrow margin, Democrat John Fetterman won his race in Pennsylvania against Republican Mehmet Oz; Oz had gained a narrow lead in the polls toward the end of the campaigns. In Arizona, incumbent Democrat Mark Kelly won his very competitive senate race against Blake Masters. Finally, no candidate in Georgia's senate race reached 50% of the total vote, meaning a runoff between the two candidates with the most votes is scheduled for December. The two candidates advancing to the runoff are incumbent Democrat Raphael Warnock and Republican Hershel Walker, who had 49.4% and 48.5% of the vote respectively. Most political analysts say Democrats are favored for a variety of reasons, such as Walker's multiple scandals during his campaign, the fact Warnock led in the first election and all Democratic fundraising being focused on just this election. The runoff election in Georgia is likely to determine true control of the US Senate, considering the 50/50 majority is only a Democratic majority while the Vice President is a Democrat.

Relevant Results

IN Senate
Todd Young — 59%
Republican

House IN-3
Jim Banks — 65%
Republican

IN Secretary of State
Diego Morales — 54%
Republican

At-Large	50D
Senate	49R
51 for Majority	1?

SACS School Board
Kim Moppert - 27%
Stephanie Veit - 22%
Non-Partisan

The History of American Political Mascots

written and designed by
AZALEA ORSINI

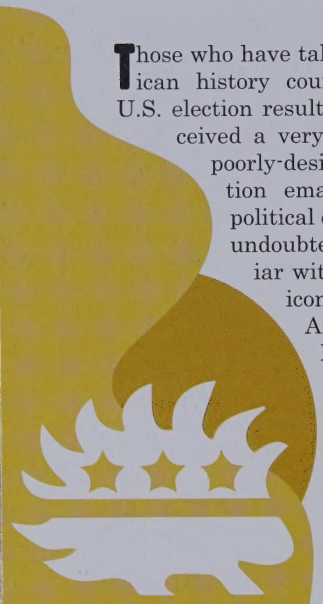
Those who have taken an American history course, watched U.S. election results or have received a very intense and poorly-designed donation email from any political candidate are undoubtedly familiar with the animal iconography of American political parties. Democrats are donkeys and Republicans are elephants. Many people, though, haven't taken much time to consider why these seemingly random mascots are what they are, nor have they thought about the mascots of other minor parties. Let's look deeper into these positively political, pachydermic, perissodactylic, and proboscidean popular icons.

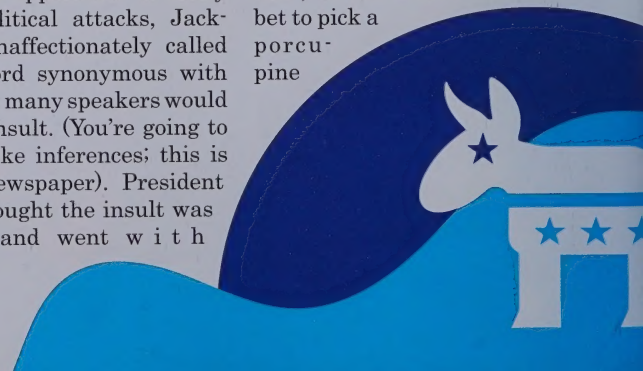
Thomas Nast was a very attentive cartoonist on Harper's Weekly, able to find patterns and comedic situations and turn them into symbols. This is exactly what Nast did with the two political party mascots: the elephant and the donkey. Nast was born in 1840 in Germany and died in 1902; he was a Republican, yet the mascots he chose don't particularly flatter either party.

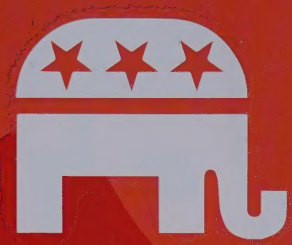
When the Party of the Elephant, the Republican Party (GOP), started, their platform was a hit in the North! By the start of the Civil War, Lincoln's party became synonymous with the Union's cause, whose soldiers had a peculiar term for war combat: "seeing the elephant." In 1874, Thomas Nast put those two ideas together, and the elephant as a symbol of Republicans was born. Republican Abraham Lincoln, however, had one occasion in which he denied the elephant, literally. During the Civil War, the King of Siam (now Thailand), offered President Lincoln multiple war elephants. Lincoln politely rejected the offer, citing that the American climate was unfavorable to "the multiplication of the elephant." It seems that Lincoln neglected to consider that the elephants were for combat purposes, not multiplication.

The Democrats, on the other hand, have a less elegant story. During Andrew Jackson's run for office, he experienced many colorful words of opposition; in many of such political attacks, Jackson was unaffectionately called a crude word synonymous with donkey that many speakers would use as an insult. (You're going to have to make inferences; this is a school newspaper). President Jackson thought the insult was humorous and went with the donkey as the representation of his party. Thomas Nast reportedly agreed, because his illustrations of the parties from then on showed a donkey and an elephant. Notably, Republican Calvin Coolidge was the only president to own an actual donkey; there seems to be a pattern of party leaders neglecting their mascots.

There are a few smaller known American parties with their own mascots. The Libertarian Party is the largest minor American party, averaging 5% of the national vote. Their platform is an individual-focused movement of small government and expanding the free market and individual rights. According to the very limited internet sources, the Libertarian Party originally decided on the "liberty penguin," which is incredibly random and has no history or symbolism attached. Conveniently, in 2006, a man named Kevin Breen–who may not exist, considering one Wikipedia mention is the only evidence of his existence anywhere–designed the libertarian porcupine. Their de-facto motto is "Don't tread on me!", so it's a safe bet to pick a porcupine







(which you should NOT attempt to step on for safety reasons, please). Unfortunately for political cartoon lovers, Thomas Nast died long before 2006, so we didn't get any silly porcupine illustrations from the man himself; you can't win 'em all.

The other moderately relevant minor party is the Green Party. As the name suggests, the Green Party advocates for a leftist ecological approach to government, battling climate change and accompanying economic inequalities. Much like the other three mentioned parties, the Greens do not display their assumed mascot officially, just for cartoonists and whoever makes those awful political graphics on Canva. The Green Party pulled a Noah's Ark and elected the earth, and consequently every animal, as the mascot of the party. Now, every animal that has and will ever live is represented. Good for them.

Nobody, however, is asking the real questions: What do the people think of these mascots? Do they represent their party well? Does anybody actually think about this? Republican-aligned student Jesika Brindel (11) said she, for one, hadn't thought much on the topic. "I've always thought that an elephant and a donkey were weird animals to pick," Brindle said, "but in the context of that political cartoon that started that trend, I think it made sense for the media motives at the time." Brindel gently rejects the elephant as a good symbol for the party, citing that elephants could be "conveyed as a dopey animal, even though elephants are very smart." Her suggestion for an alternative Republican mascot was an eagle. Eagles are generally the symbol of American nationalism, and Brindel argues this would make sense due to the "pro-America" beliefs of the Republican party.

Aidan Anderson(10), a democrat-aligned leftist, says the donkey is a poorly thought-out relic of the Dixie Democrats. "[The donkey's] intended purpose was an insult to the members of the Democratic party," said Anderson. Another criticism of the mascot that Anderson gave was that "the symbol was first used by the Democratic party when they were still the party of the South and [were] the party that had advocated for secession from the United States." While Anderson likes the perceived symbolism of the donkey as a stubborn and strong beast, he finds the history distasteful. His alternative is the bison. "Bison are large and tough creatures who stand their ground, and don't back down," he argues.

Libertarian student Hudson Mulhall (10), on the other hand, has a more positive opinion of his mascot. Mulhall says the Libertarian porcupine "is cute, and fits well with the other parties in its simplistic silhouette design, compared to the penguin." He also appreciates the symbolism of the porcupine, an animal that "will only hurt you if you try to hurt it. Porcupines just want to be left alone." However, Mulhall has an interesting idea for an alternative mascot: the bee. "Bees both are community machines while also being portrayed as incredibly free," says Mulhall, "This shows how Libertarians don't want government control, but certainly like strong communities to still thrive."

Overall, Nast got it right. If there's one thing Americans can agree on, it's that the United States is an over-sensationalized political circus. The adoption of Nast's mascots by the Republicans and Democrats, which were created to serve as vehicles for political criticism and satire, perfectly exemplify how American satire is so often grounded in our wild (no pun intended) —and often exhausting— political reality.

SPARTAN FALL RECAP

A REVIEW OF HOMESTEAD HIGH SCHOOL'S FALL SPORTS SEASON

written by
ELAINA SCHILT & ALESSIA PASSONI
designed by
LUKE LAND

PHOTO COURTESY OF LESLIE PALMER

FOOTBALL

The football team ended their season with a record of 5-5. Chad Zolman, the team's head coach said that "watching [the] team develop into a brotherhood" was the highlight of the season this year. Though the team did not win their sectional title, there were still many valuable lessons learned throughout the season.

"One thing I have learned this year is to just have fun," explained starting quarterback Peyton Slaven (12). "We all always take football very seriously... so I have just gone out there and did what I was coached to do and had fun with my brothers."

This season, the Spartans added a new talent to the roster: Grant Leeper, the 6-foot 7-inches, 215-pound wide receiver/tight end combo, who shared that the hardest part of playing football at Homestead for the first time was "learning all of the plays and offensive concepts" over the course of the season. "I became a better player by improving my blocking, route running and overall IQ of the game."

Looking back on the season, Slaven recalled that his season highlight was "Senior Night" at home v. Northrop. "It was a surreal feeling walking the track as a senior with all of my best friends that I have played with...for so many years," explained Slaven. Additionally, Leeper's "personal season highlight was being named [to the All-SAC 1st Team]."

GIRLS' GOLF

The girls' golf team went into the postseason ranked number 10 in the state. Eyeing another state title, the girls worked hard to prepare. "We have really improved, especially in our matches towards the end of the regular season," stated Scarlett Senk (11). The girls won their sectional title at Timer Ridge Golf Course in Bluffton, Indiana with a team score of 309, beating runner-up Norwell by nearly 90 strokes. Junior Eliza Saal, who won sectionals individually, shared that the girls have "goals to achieve as a team and individual goals we all push each other towards."

The girls placed second at the regional championship at Noble Hawk Golf Course, qualifying them for state. The state finals took place in Carmel, Indiana. The team's coach, Rod Parker, said that the girls "exceeded expectations this season by earning a fourth place finish as the State Tournament and getting a spot on the podium."

Now that this year's season is over, the girls are already working towards winning next year's state championship. Senk explained, "In the off-season, I plan on working on perfecting my swing and getting more distance with my driver so that we can come back next year and win more invitationals." The girls are all hopeful about the future of the team during the coming seasons. "With all five state participants returning next year, the expectations will be high once again for the Homestead girls' golf team. We...will work hard to put ourselves in a position to compete for a state title next year," said Coach Parker.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROD PARKER

The girls' golf team standing on the podium after finishing 4th place in the sectional championship round.

VOLLEYBALL

The girls' volleyball team finished their season with a 25-6 record, the best record that Homestead has had since 1982. Jessica Holtzclaw, head coach of the varsity team, said, "We had a great season this year... [we] won our 4th sectional in a row and finished 2-1 in playoffs." With all the hard work that these players put into their season, she couldn't be more proud.

Senior Kendal Frey touched on the team's success this season. She said that the highlight of her season was "beating schools we haven't beat in years, like Concordia, as well as being one of the only teams to take a set off of Angola... that was a huge accomplishment for us." Kendal will continue her volleyball career at Saint Francis University and is excited for a new season.

One member of the volleyball team, Haley Biedenbach (12), made her 1,000th career assist this season. She says, "Getting 1,000 assists was so exciting! It's a goal I have been working towards for a long time, and finally hitting it was super exciting." Haley will continue her volleyball career at the University of Bethel and hopes to coach as she get older. The team's primary goal for next season is advancing past regionals to semi-state.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LESLIE PALMER

The Lady Spartans celebrating after beating Snider 3-0.

BOYS' SOCCER

The boys soccer team had a great season with a sectional semifinals win and a shot for a sectional championship. Although they did not win, they boys' soccer team competed well this year. Coach Ryan Cassedy said, "there were many lessons learned and challenges met along the way that made us better as players and men." Captain Nick Gallagher reflected on his athletic career and said, "I have learned that setting an example is crucial as a captain and it is important to positively uplift the team. I loved the team and the experiences we shared during these past [four] years."

Cassedy already has goals for next season: "win another sectional title and be able to host our regional semi final on the new stadium field. We also have a goal to go undefeated against Fort Wayne area schools." He's excited to see the talent and skill level underclassman players will bring for next season.

GIRLS' SOCCER

For the girls' soccer team, expectations were high after their State Championship last year. Homestead Girls' Soccer Coach Rich Link said, "It was tougher on the girls, as this team...graduated eight starters from last season." The main goal of the team this year was to "improve throughout the year so that we are playing our best in the tournament," explained Link. "I feel that we met this goal...as we won our sectional for the fifth year in a row over a tough Warsaw team." Sadly, the girls didn't come out on top in their regional game against the number one team in the state, Noblesville.

The season was full of valuable memories and important lessons. "The friendships that are built through high school sports are friendships that will last a lifetime," shared senior Sydney Couch. "Building those friendships and just enjoying being around the team is so much more important than our performances on the soccer field." Couch also explained that the highlights of the season for her were "beating Carroll" and watching "Coach Link [get] his 100th win." Couch's plans after high school include "playing soccer at Indiana Wesleyan University while also studying nursing."

Additionally, the girls welcomed freshman Lillian Yohey, who played goalie, to the team this season. Yohey stated that the most valuable lesson she learned from her first year on the team was "to give what you want to do every ounce of effort you've got." She reflected on the fact that she "was given an amazing opportunity to work with an amazing team," which allowed her to "become a better player." The team is hopeful to advance further in their postseason next year.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LESLIE PALMER

Sydney Couch (20) escaping a Canterbury defender.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY ERB

Jacob Cohen (5) passing the ball to Levi Hallman (4).

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

The girls' cross-country team ended their season with a shot at the state title. Coach Sarah Wyss stated, "The girls team finished fourth, putting us on the awards podium." Junior Addison Knoblauch finished 8th overall, earning All-State Honors, and Elise Peckinpaugh (12) placed 35th. Wyss shared that she is proud of her team and all they have accomplished this season.

The highlight of Knoblauch's season was "watching Elise win her first varsity race. She ran confidently and had a breakthrough, and I couldn't be more proud of her." She also touched on what she has learned from this season: "I have learned to be grateful for every opportunity I am presented with because the ability to run is such a blessing... I have learned that there is more than one way to succeed, everyone needs something a little different to reach their goals."

Peckinpaugh revealed that the highlight of her season was the "Northrop Invitational because Elly Kiess and I both won our races. It was really special to me because we're both the only seniors who have been on the team for four years...I was really happy to have a memory of us winning in high school together in our last season." Reflecting on her high school cross-country career, Peckinpaugh also shared, "In my previous three seasons, I struggled with getting out fast...at the beginning of a race. This year...I've competed the best I have any season." The team plans on coming back strong next season and working towards the state championship.

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

The boys' cross-country team faced several challenges at the beginning of their season. Coach Ian Wilson explained that these difficulties included "losing four seniors, and losing our [assistant] coach...we knew it would be an uphill climb with such a young team." The team was able to overcome these obstacles, sharing in many successes throughout the season. Wilson shared that the team's greatest accomplishment this season was placing well "in the USA Race of Champions at the Nike Twilight Invitational."

While reflecting on his season, senior Grayson Welch said that his personal season highlight was "winning the Snider Hokum Karem." Welch also shared a valuable lesson that he learned this season: "I have learned how goals can bring people together...I have seen how our goals help us to find common ground and work together. It is part of what makes us human: our ability to give up our selfish desires to further a common goal."

Though the team did not make it to the regional stage of their postseason, three racers advanced to regionals individually, and Aiden Waugh (10) advanced to semi-state. Regarding the future of the team, Wilson said, "We [will] have everyone back that ran at Sectionals. We have high aspirations for next year."

BOYS' TENNIS

PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY ERB

Eric Ji (9), 3 singles, serves the ball to his opponent.

The boys' tennis team had an extremely successful season, advancing all the way to the state semifinals. After winning the regional championship, Homestead beat Culver Academies in the state quarterfinals. However, the team lost their match against number-one-ranked Harrison West Lafayette in the semifinals.

Regarding the team's postseason performance, Coach Michael Hower stated, "We performed very well. I think the difficulty of our regular season really set us up for success." Likewise, Stephen Meier (11), who played number-one singles this season, said, "I think that I have competed well... I have found a way to stay focused in every match throughout the season."

The highlight of the season was "beating Carroll in the Regional Championship," shared Hower. Additionally, Meier's personal season highlight was "beating Carmel," adding that "Carmel is a very tough team to play against, [and] before this year, I was 0-5 against them...it was nice to finally get a win." Hower explained that with two freshmen playing this season and all but one player returning, the team has "a lot of aspirations for next year," including a state title.

FLAG FOOTBALL

Homestead's Unified Flag Football team finished their season with an 11-3-1 record and an appearance in the sectional championship. With major victories over Manchester, Warsaw and New Haven, it the most successful season to date.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALESSIA PASSAW

The Flag Football team warming up before a home game.

MAX ATTACK

written and designed by
SAMUEL COLE

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN BRANCH

1984 Audi Sport Quattro S1E2

PHOTO COURTESY OF JAY AUGER

1985 Lancia Delta S4

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID EVANS

1984 Porsche 959 Group B

PHOTO COURTESY OF JAY AUGER

1985 Ford RS200

These are only a few of the many examples of what manufacturers are capable of when there is only one rule: There are no rules.

Rally (also spelled rallye), as an "automobile competition over a specified public route with a driver and navigator attempting to keep to a predetermined schedule between checkpoints. The course is generally unknown to contestants until the start of the rally."

Group B was a set of regulations for sports car racing that was introduced in 1982 by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the governing body of most non-American motorsports. The FIA introduced Group B as a way to attract more manufacturers by giving full reign to the designers. Crazy aerodynamics, all-wheel-drive, insanely powerful engines and numerous exotic materials were only a few of the potentially limitless modifications that the rules allowed. According to FIA World Rally Championship (WRC), "a Group B car could accelerate from 0-60 mph on a gravel road in just 2.3 seconds.

Group B is often considered the golden age of rallying, despite its short lifespan of four years. The sport was physically demanding for drivers, with races taking place in stages ranging from sweltering deserts to freezing tundras. To quote Juha Kankkunen, a four-time World Rally champion, "WRC is for boys, Group B was for men." Group B brought some of the most spectacular cars and some of the best drivers in the world, including Timo Salonen, who is number one because of a simple reason: he is the record holder for Group B era wins, winning seven times and becoming the 1985 world champion.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LAT PHOTOGRAPHIC

Timo Salonen and his co-driver, Seppo Harjanne

PHOTO COURTESY OF SILVERSTONE (UK)

1985 Peugeot 205 T16

But no driver is complete without their car. For Salonen, that car was the 1985 Peugeot 205 T16, the specs of which are listed below:

- 424 Horsepower @ 7500 RPM
- 362 ft/lbs of torque @ 5500 RPM
- 2.4 Liters/151 Cubic Inches
- Curb weight of 2,424

If you watch any Group B footage, you'll notice that many of the spectators stand on the track, and that the spectators only move out of the way once a car moves through. Group B commonly raced on public roads, meaning anyone could view the race as closely as they wanted to. However, it meant that many got extremely close to the cars. Occasionally, people were hit, but it was considered part of the challenge for the drivers. They had to keep their foot on the gas and hope that the fans would move out of the way.

The fact that the sport was extremely dangerous cannot be ignored. The cars were too powerful and too difficult to drive. In addition, not enough emphasis was put on the safety of the drivers and the spectators. The main issue was the minimum weight rule, which stated that the cars could weigh as little as 1,960 lbs (the average weight of a street car today is around 3,300 lbs). To be as competitive as possible, manufacturers did anything they could to cut down on weight, creating a generation of cars that were very fragile and didn't protect the driver in a crash. A commonly thought solution to this problem was that if the minimum weight limit was raised, more strengthening could be added to better protect the drivers.

Many bad crashes did occur. During the 1986 season in Portugal, Joaquim Santos arrived over a crest in his Ford RS200, losing control and going off the course, horrifically injuring 31 spectators and killing three. All the other teams immediately pulled out of the race to prevent further mishaps, mishaps which left Group B hanging on by a thread. The final blow would come only a few months later.

Lancia Racing's driver Henri Toivonen, who was a championship favorite, lost control late in a fast turn. He was winning by a large margin when he and his co-driver Sergio Cresto came flying off the road and down a steep hill. The impact ruptured the fuel tank, spilling fuel all over the car and drivers, both of which went up in flames. After the incident, the mangled and twisted steel could hardly be recognized as a car anymore. This led to many manufacturers pulling out and the FIA ending the Group B class the following year.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES CAYDON

Spectators watch as the remnants of Toivonen's car are removed

But Group B was not entirely a loss. The legacy that Group B had left behind is a space that modern rally cars still try to fill. The technologies and techniques used then are still common practice today, such as complex turbocharger systems and all-wheel-drive. If it weren't for the advancements and feats accomplished, who knows where rally would be today without Group B?

PHOTO COURTESY OF FORD

Ford RS200 sliding through the snow

BLACK FOREST CAT CAFÉ

a closer look into the local business and its origin

written by
MELODY THRASHER
designed by Melody Thrasher and Azalea Orsini

The Black Forest Cat Café: an elaborate and tasty menu, a spacious room for adoptable cats and whimsical and minimalistic decor. With all of this in addition to a friendly staff, the cat café is thriving.

Black Forest Cat Café's mission is ultimately to reduce the number of cats in animal shelters. Located off Coldwater Road, this business achieves this goal by providing a welcoming and fun atmosphere in which the cats and potential owners can interact. The café is set up in an intentional manner: a seating area with a coffee bar where you can order baked goods and a drink, and then a completely separate room for the cats and guests to connect. The café part of the building is sanitary and separate from the interactions with the cats. In a cage-free environment, the cats can relax and enjoy interacting with the customers until they are adopted.

The business was started by a mother and daughter duo, Julie and Emily Pressler, who both share a love for cats. In an interview, Emily, the daughter, revealed more insight into how the business started. According to Pressler, the idea to start a cat café was inspired by one they visited in Indianapolis. After seeing "what good it does for the community," they "thought they'd take the leap and start [their] own." Knowing how many cats were in shelters and needed homes, Pressler and her mother were able to have a solid "why" for their business, and thus the idea for a cat café in Fort Wayne was born.

Making their dream a reality required "a lot of planning," Emily said. She noted that they were "very lucky because everybody in our family kind of had different hobbies and interests that really helped with every step of the way." For instance, her mother was good at evaluating business affiliations—which manufacturers they should go with, where to source the coffee and which local businesses to work with. In addition, her father was well-versed in finance, so he did all of the business planning for the cat café. Emily herself had a knack for design, so she helped design the logo, design the merch and create the website.

The process of getting the cat café together and ready to open to the public took about a year's time. The planning alone was about six months, followed by around three months of finding the building and further construction. Once they finally found their desired building, they had to build the wall to separate the cat room from the café room, build a kitchen area and the benches—which they cut and painted themselves to save money. For the same reason, they decorated the building themselves. When asked what advice to give to aspiring entrepreneurs, Pressler recommends having a good support system. To trust and to know that everyone will be able to pull their weight is ideal. She says that when it comes to starting your own business "hang in there, it'll be worth it in the end."

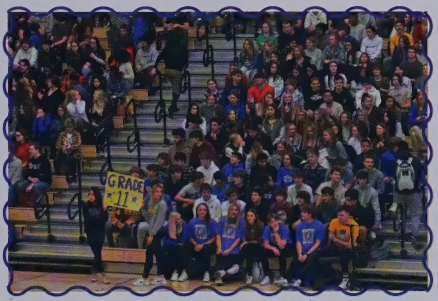
Pep Rally

designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

Homestead cheerleaders lead students in singing the Homestead fight song

Dawn Rybolt's service dog, Cricket, joins the Survival of the Spartans volleyball game

A flutist in the Homestead Spartan Alliance Pep Band



Students in the Class of 2024 section

The Spartan Alliance Pep Band plays "G Big Blue" and "Rock and Roll Part 2"

Homestead students and staff (along with Sparty the Spartan) face off in tug-of-war.

Check out the Pep Rally spread in the 2022-23 yearbook! Order one for $50 at yearbooksforever.com

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KYE ELWARD & LONDON HARRIS

Sustainable Farming

Where are Indiana's

written a
ISABELLA AMBROS

Indiana Farms

When you take a drive through Indiana, what do you see? Maybe luscious corn fields, an aromatic cow farm or a vibrant red barn. Indiana, one of the top 10 agricultural states in the US, has its fair share of farming. Most of Indiana farms grow their products (whether that's livestock or produce) on industrial farms. However, as more farm-to-table restaurants pop up around Indiana, the need for sustainable farming practices is rising.

How many people actually know the specifics of industrial and sustainable farming, though? And how do these farming techniques shape Indiana's agriculture?

What is Industrial Farming?

Industrial agriculture refers to a method of farming that uses modernized techniques and antibiotics to ensure the greatest production of livestock. Industrial farming, also known as factory farming, is designed to maximize profit by producing as much livestock as possible, while minimizing cost by using the least resources and shortest amount of time possible. Products that are commonly industrially-farmed are eggs, pork, beef and milk. According to the Sentience Institute, a predicted 99% of animals in the U.S. are currently in industrial farms.

Factory farming improves local economies because of the sheer amount of jobs these farms offer. The Culver Duck Farm in Middlebury, Indiana stated that they provided about 225 jobs.

Another benefit to this method of farming is its allowance for food variety during all seasons. The growth of animals, like chicken and cows, can happen year-round. Not only does this increase the variety of meat offered seasonally, but it also increases food availability. The efficiency of these farms allows them to produce livestock at a fast rate, while keeping prices reasonable.

Despite the positives of industrial agriculture, it is nowhere near perfect. On factory farms, resources like food, water, space and temperature are highly regulated to ensure production is maximized. Animals are usually confined in small areas to maximize the amount of livestock farmed in one area. This practice can cause cases of animal cruelty, genetic mutations and the spread of diseases. Furthermore, spacial limitations can stress animals, leading to animal aggression, such as biting and cannibalism.

Although, industiral farms seek to utilize space as effectively as possible, this does not always mean animals are crammed shoulder-to-shoulder. For example the Culver Duck Farm continues to "make sure that [their] free roaming barns allow enough space for [their] ducks to freely stand, walk and spread their wings as they choose."

Factory farms are the recipients of controversy from many environmentalists, animal rights activists and consumers because its farming practices erode soil, use antibiotics and pollute water and air. Additionally, the animal waste from factory farming produces excessive amounts of nitrogen, which seeps into soil and cannot be cycled through efficiently.

On some factory farms, animals go through tail-docking or debeaking. Debeaking removes parts of top and bottom beaks to reduce fighting between chickens. Tail-docking removes part of an animals' tail. These procedures are typically done without anesthetics. Very few states have banned tail-docking because it increases the cleanliness of the animals, reduces infections and lessens the likelihood tail injuries.

What is Sustainable Farming?

Sustainable farming, also called regenerative or pasture farming, seeks to prioritize quality over quantity. The basic premise of a sustainable farms is to minimize excessive use of resources like water, space and fuels. To achieve this, sustainable farms use techniques like permaculture, biodynamic farming, hydroponics and natural pest control to ensure that their products are higher-quality and more resource-conscious than industrial farms. These methods are used in order to benefit the environment and animals, along with improving the pH of soil, food nutrition and quality of life for the animals they farm.

Another benefit to sustainable farming is efficiency and cost. In an interview with Seven Sons

s Industrial Farming:

rms heading today?

signed by
ND YEVVA IRELAND

In an interview with Seven Sons Farm, they stated that "when correctly implemented, regenerative farming practices do not add cost for consumers or farmers. Rather regenerative practices will only decrease cost and increase profits for farmers as their solids become more productive and less reliant on fertilizer inputs."

The Marsden Farm study, an agricultural study on the effects of crop rotation in Illinois, proved that crop rotation and sustainable farming increased profits and crop yields. The Union of Concerned Scientists (USCUSA) stated that on industrial farms, "manure is likely to become a waste product and water pollutant." Sustainable farms, like the Marsden Farm, can use animal waste as "an asset, fertilizing the crops, improving soil quality, and reducing the fossil fuel needed to transport grain and manufacture synthetic fertilizers." Thus, sustainable farming bridges industrial farming and new methods of farming.

Like industrial farming, sustainable farming has its drawbacks. Because sustainable farming produces products of a higher quality, the products may be less affordable than those of industrial farms. For people who have tight budgets, spending a little extra on food is not always possible. Pasture farming can take up more space than industrial farms because the animals are given room to roam. Also, it would be practically impossible to switch all of the industrial farms in America to sustainable farms. It would not be cost effective initially, and many people may lose their jobs.

Additionally, the government offers little incentives for regenerative farming. This means that many farmers will have greater risks beginning a sustainable farm. Since profit on sustainable farms take a while before showing significant profit, this puts many farmers off this method of farming.

Is one type of farming better?

There is no doubt that factory farming and sustainable farming have good and bad aspects. Both types of farms cater to a different need. Factory farms produce lots of goods quickly, but sometimes at the expense of the animals or the product. Stephanie Merkling, Homestead's Environmental Science teacher, stated that an upside to factory farms is that they "reduce the potential loss of biodiversity by keeping the animals confined and not overgrazing vegetation." Nevertheless, she continued on to say that "having the animals collectively using resources and producing waste in such large quantities tends to cause a significant release of organic waste and gases." These byproducts can cause pollution.

Sustainable farms are a more ethical way to animal products, but they produce less product than factory farms. Merkling explained that "sustainable farming provides longevity for the process and is often a healthier food for both the animals themselves as well as for the consumers.

Although sustainable farming and industrial farming have their advantages and disadvantages, it's safe to say that in the future, sustainable farming is the ultimate goal. Many factory farms are seeking out ways to become more sustainable.

Industrial farms are beginning to use new technologies and ideas to take advantage of waste products. According to Culver Duck Farm, one technique they employ is their "anaerobic digester that allows [them] to take processing waste and turn it into methane gas, which is then burned... [to] create energy."

When Seven Sons Farm was asked about their opinion on the future of sustainable farming, they exclaimed that "the future is very bright for all farmers when you consider how many opportunities there are for adopting new technologies and advancements in regenerative farming practices."

The future of sustainable farming in Indiana looks promising as farms work towards adopting farming techniques that will keep the environment usable for generations to come.

WHERE ARE ALL THE RED WOLVES OF INDIANA?

AN INSIGHT INTO THE LARGER SCOPE OF THE CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

THE RED WOLF

Upon asking a Homestead student to share their best animal stories, one can expect a tale of an altercation with a squirrel, rat, bird, raccoon, deer, opossum or even the rare coyote. Most notable is the absence of stories surrounding red wolves, even among the population of students who consider themselves to be avid outdoorsmen. There are few Indiana residents who can recall any animal encounters with a red wolf as its subject. The reason for this is simple: all the red wolves in Indiana are extinct. However, conservation activists and educators alike throughout the United States seek to change the red wolf's fate.

The red wolf, or Canis rufus, is the world's most endangered wolf. A population that used to roam the Eastern and South Central regions of the United States (including Indiana), now sits at a measly 15 to 17 wolves roaming the forests of North Carolina and 241 others in captive breeding facilities throughout the United States.

Red wolves have been on the endangered list since 1967, a mere year after the passing of the Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966. The long path to recovery began in the following decade, but due to inadequate government protection, the red wolves quickly disappeared faster than conservation programs could keep up with them. Having been decimated by predator control programs and the desecration of their habitats, the red wolves were soon declared extinct in the wild in 1980. The remaining few red wolves were taken into captivity so that they would not completely disappear from the world's taxonomy.

"We do not currently have red wolves," said Tara Lay, Senior Animal Keeper as well as the Intern and Volunteer Program Coordinator at the Red Wolf Sanctuary, located in Rising Sun, Indiana. The last red wolf in Indiana died in this sanctuary in 2010, and with it, a long-lasting legacy of the animal in this geographic region.

However, not all is lost. As a result of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Red Wolf Recovery Program, the red wolf is the first large carnivore in the United States that has been successfully reintroduced into North Carolina's forests after being brought to the brink of extinction. As of 2022, the program is currently undergoing revision as a result of ongoing discussions on what more can be done to aid the red wolf. While one key component of the program is captive breeding, another element that is far more difficult to control is crucial to its success: human action.

While Lay points to hybridization (the process of the last few wild red wolves mating with coyotes) and habitat destruction as the main causes of population decline, the retaliation of humans that have found red wolves on their property has been brutal. In 2018, as a part of the recovery program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services called landowners of land that red wolves frequented to ensure that they would not be bothered. These calls also served as a way for landowners to contact when faced with concerns and issues about the red wolves

on their property.

"We care about preserving this very symbolic species and I think that if we continue with captive breeding programs and cross-fostering programs that there is a lot of hope for red wolves out there," said Lay.

While the red wolf is expected to become a success story, the red wolf's population decline is only a small part of a larger, more troubling trend.

THE WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

Published on October 13 of this year, the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) biennial Living Planet Report 2022 revealed a concerning trend: wildlife populations have plummeted by an average of 69% since the 1970s. Determined by examining nearly 32,000 species and taking an average of the proportional change in population over the past 50 years, the Living Planet Index is a measure of how environmental pressures and human involvement have impacted wildlife.

These trends in population abundance can determine the success of a conservation program and can reveal any deficiencies in regulation. Within the 69% decline, the Living Planet Report 2022 revealed the populations most affected: wildlife populations in Latin America have decreased by an average of 94% and monitored freshwater populations have decreased by an average of 83%.

The report goes on to identify six main threats to biodiversity: agriculture, hunting, pollution, logging, invasive species and climate change. Most threats are attributed to side effects of human impact on the environment. For example, the reason for the drastic population decline in Latin America is deforestation in the Amazon Rainforest; the building of dams and reservoirs in rivers has hurt the ability of fish to feed and breed, contributing to the decline in freshwater populations.

Alongside statistics, the report presents possible solutions to combat the growing destruction of biodiversity throughout the world. First, it asks readers to rethink the level of separation between climate change and the loss of biodiversity, arriving at the conclusion that they are closely interlinked. Currently, the leading cause of species decline is land use, but climate change is set to take over as number one in the near future. The report points out proactive steps that the world can take to prevent the worsening of climate change, specifically through government action.

"Small nonprofits and boards of people can do a lot to raise awareness and funding to get the education out there to the public," Lay continued, "however the government has the ability to say yes, this animal is protected, or no, this animal is not protected."

On an international scale, the United Nations (UN) 15th conference of the Convention on Biological Diversity is taking place in Montreal, Canada between December 7 and 19. The report addresses this convention as the optimal time to create legislation that could turn these troubling trend lines around. World leaders have the opportunity to make fundamental changes and countries can dedicate themselves to preventing the exacerbation of climate change.

As a continuation of their call to action, the Living Planet Report 2022 emphasizes the role that Indigenous populations should play in making these decisions. "[The government] hasn't listened to many of the people who have a relationship with nature, including Indigenous peoples"

said Rebecca Nesbit, writer, author and ecologist. Negative consequences of biodiversity loss often affect Indigenous peoples the hardest due to their closeness with nature.

Both views are needed to contribute to conservation efforts, and as it stands, Indigenous peoples do not often receive the platform they need to speak out on these issues.

In addition to the proposed solutions in WWF's Living Planet Report 2022, other conservationists have their ideas on what the future of conservation should look like.

SOLUTIONS

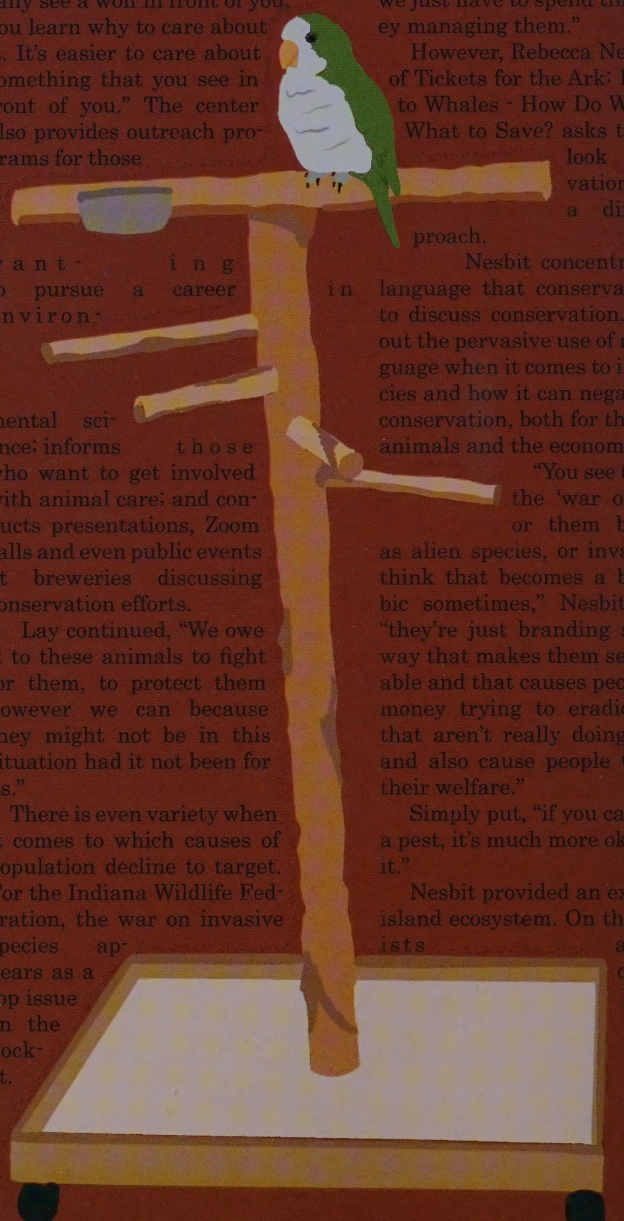
Conservationists, like all humans, often disagree on the best course of action when it comes to saving the environment and those that live within it.

Aaron Stump, Habitat Programs Manager of the Indiana Wildlife Federation said, "You'll be hard-pressed to find a conservationist who would pick and choose wildlife to protect, but we do often find ourselves prioritizing conservation out of necessity."

He continued that when it comes to conservation, many organizations do not have the time and money to protect every ecosystem, so it is imperative to focus on the most crucial groups that are likely to perish without immediate action.

This was the main push behind the passing of the Endangered Species Preservation Act and the creation of an endangered species list. Even in this list, there are guidelines to determine which species are most at risk and where they fall among the scale of least concern to extinction. The World Wildlife Fund lists 10 groups of species as targets for priority conservation, the requirements being that the species are either key elements of the food chain, aid stability in some environments, live as cultural icons or are otherwise important for the livelihood of local communities. This means that species like the giant panda, although not necessarily important in terms of the animal itself (they are rather costly to maintain in captivity), are still important to conserve for their roles as Chinese cultural icons and as contributors to the germination of bamboo.

At the Red Wolf Sanctuary, the rehabilitation center is dedicated to educating the public on the negative effects of human impact on species. Lay stated the importance of their tours "when you can physically see a wolf in front of you, you learn why to care about it. It's easier to care about something that you see in front of you." The center also provides outreach programs for those wanting to pursue a career in environmental science; informs those who want to get involved with animal care; and conducts presentations, Zoom calls and even public events at breweries discussing conservation efforts.



Lay continued, "We owe it to these animals to fight for them, to protect them however we can because they might not be in this situation had it not been for us."

There is even variety when it comes to which causes of population decline to target. For the Indiana Wildlife Federation, the war on invasive species appears as a top issue on the docket.

Whether it be feral hogs, Asian carp or the Emerald Ash Borer, invasive species have the potential to decimate native populations. Stump has found that invasive species are the most troublesome when it comes to conservation efforts.

Stump said, "Whenever we seek to create or improve existing spaces, we have to start by fighting off invasives. Many times, it isn't even possible to remove or prevent invasives, we just have to spend time and money managing them."

However, Rebecca Nesbit, author of Tickets for the Ark: From Wasps to Whales - How Do We Choose to What to Save? asks the public to look at conservation through a different approach.

Nesbit concentrates on the language that conservationists use to discuss conservation. She points out the pervasive use of military language when it comes to invasive species and how it can negatively affect conservation, both for the individual animals and the economy.

"You see things about the 'war on invasives' or them being called as alien species, or invaders, and I think that becomes a bit xenophobic sometimes," Nesbit continued, "they're just branding species in a way that makes them seem undesirable and that causes people to waste money trying to eradicate species that aren't really doing any harm, and also cause people to disregard their welfare."

Simply put, "if you call an animal a pest, it's much more okay to poison it."

Nesbit provided an example of an island ecosystem. On this island exists a native species of flightless bird that lays its eggs in burrows and humans introduce

a rodent that eats those eggs and causes massive havoc on other native species, knowingly or unknowingly. This causes the bird's population to decline and the invasive species to thrive. The traditional conservationist's view is to eradicate millions, even billions of rats and mice, either through poison or other morbid means to protect the species of flightless birds. Nesbit states that she believes in the practicality of some conservation measures and that some invasive species are truly causing harm and need to be eradicated for the welfare of the rest of the animals in an environment. However, many invasive species are not worth fighting because they are relatively harmless.

She further challenges the language used by conservationists through the terms that have been used to educate people on the importance of conservation.

Nesbit believes that "ecosystem collapse" is not necessarily the calamity that everyone thinks it is. "We often use words like that, that really, if you think about it, you mean the ecosystem no longer looks like how you want it to look," said Nesbit. She also addresses the term "ecosystem health," pointing out the inaccuracy in that an ecosystem, a group of many species, cannot be healthy. However, an individual animal can be, and through a reframing of language, it can increase the value that people place on individual animal welfare.

"There's no correct way that the world should look and we need to think about what we want the future to look like. [Conservation] doesn't have to be based on saving everything, it doesn't have to be based on how ecosystems looked in the past" is her prevailing belief. The way the ecosystems of the future should look is something that Nesbit believes should be left up to humans.

"Some people take natural to mean the absence of humans. But, humans evolved as a part of nature, there's no intrinsic reason why humans impacting the rest of nature is unnatural," said Nesbit.

GET INVOLVED

While government legislation and other grand-scale changes like UN Conventions are ideal methods of action when it comes to conservation, these options are not necessarily accessible to teenagers.

For some, changing local legislation is much more feasible. Stump promotes involvement in organizational efforts to help convince legislators to act. "At home, we suggest people plant only natives and reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides and insecticides," said Stump as another suggestion of small-scale change that can be done around the household.

Lay focused on what people can do on a personal level: "Finding what you are individually passionate about and realizing what its value and importance is, and once you find that, reach out!" She states that even something as simple as following social media pages, reading a book about ecology or watching YouTube videos of conservationists speaking can become valuable parts of the conversation.

Volunteering or supporting local environmental organizations is important as well. For the Red Wolf Sanctuary, following their social media pages, donating and participating in tours are all ways to support their rehabilitation work and conservation efforts outside of the sanctuary.

Nesbit mentions the power of planting even a small patch of garden or greenery in a windowbox, "anything that makes somewhere a bit more green is going to be positive, not just for wildlife, but it also makes your environment nicer to live in."

Regardless of what occurs as a result of the Red Wolf Recovery Plan, WWF's Living Planet Report 2022, the future UN convention and what actions are taken to prevent the loss of biodiversity, there is only one thing we can count on: change.

OPEN S

THE MORALS, ETHICS, AND REA

written an
YEVVA

TYPES OF HUNTING

Hunting is a hotly debated topic. There are three types of hunting: therapeutic hunting, subsistence hunting and sport hunting, also known as trophy hunting.

The term therapeutic hunting was coined by Gary E. Varner in his book *In Nature's Interest.* It is used to control animal populations that are harming or disrupting ecosystems. For example, Project Isabella began in 1977 to save the Galápagos Islands ecosystems from goats that were overgrazing the island. The project ended in 2006 after an estimated 100,00 goat population decreased to 266 goats.

Subsistence hunting is hunting for clothes, tools, food, transportation or fuel. The hide may be utilized for leather and the meat cleaned and stored for eating. Anonymous subsistence hunter T.E. stated he "normally [tries] to take one larger deer a year" and this meat can last all the way until the next hunting season.

Many subsistence hunters hunt their own game or venison in order to avoid any unhealthy chemicals fed to animals. According to T.E., deer "aren't eating processed feed [such as] antibiotics and other supplements that you would have in beef and chicken." Antibiotics in the meat sold in stores are strictly overseen by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The most controversial type of hunting is sport hunting, defined as the pursuit and killing of an animal for the purpose of experiencing a thrill or exhilaration. Sport hunters are known for keeping the animals they hunt as trophies.

The "Big Five," a term for animals considered extremely difficult and dangerous to hunt, include the lion, leopard, elephant, African buffalo and rhino. These are among the most impressive animals that a trophy hunter can kill.

Goats on Galápagos Islands
COURTESY OF MODERN FARMER

Subsistence hunting in Alaska
COURTESY OF CBS NEWS

HOMESTEAD STUDENTS' OPINIONS

Many Homestead students are torn on the idea of hunting. Ivy Gleason (10) is "against hunting because some people just kill for fun and don't use every part of the animal." Sport hunting can be seen as "wasteful" when the animal is not effectively used. Gleason also sees a positive side to hunting, as therapeutic hunting can "keep populations from growing too large."

Another student Jack Tobias (10) has a slightly different view. Tobias thinks that "if you are going to eat meat, it's better to eat from regulated hunting areas, rather than slaughterhouses, where lots of animal abuse happens." Despite this, Tobias thinks "eating meat, in general, is immoral." He claimed "vegetarianism is the answer."

Trophy hunter Ernest Hemingway in 1934
COURTESY OF AFRICA GEOGRAPHIC

SEASON:

NS FOR AND AGAINST HUNTING

signed by
LAND

HUNTING AS A NEGATIVE

Some find hunting morally wrong because animals are unprepared and defenseless to bullets, traps and other forms of hunting. Moreover, sport hunting can generate feelings of disgust from the concept that someone could find the demise of an animal exciting.

Many argue that hunting is completely unnecessary in areas where there are supermarkets, butcher shops and stores within minutes of numerous American homes. To them, it is no question that a wild animal's life should be spared.

Hunting can also destroy animal habits and ecosystems. It leaves imbalances of predators and prey in ecosystems. This imbalance allows certain populations to grow, in turn, these animals eat too much of a species of plant or animal and lead to the demise of the ecosystem.

Additionally, hunting can leave many baby animals abandoned, causing the death of these animals, in addition to the original animal killed. Excessive hunting of an animal can even cause extinction.

The most memorable example of extinction caused by hunters is the dodo bird. Discovered in 1507, they were quickly hunted to extinction. The dodo bird was unprepared for predators making them an easy snack for sailors coming from and to the islands. The last dodo bird was killed in 1681.

Excessive poaching and hunting are a reason behind the endangerment of many exotic animal species today. The most trafficked species is the pangolin, located in Asia and Africa, a small animal used for medicines and meat. The pangolin is the only mammal entirely covered in scales. The protection of these animals is a matter of importance around the world.

HUNTING AS A POSITIVE

Others argue that animals are killed in crueler ways by more gruesome animals. In addition, they argue that hunting is not a new human behavior. It is even argued that hunting improves ecosystems.

Therapeutic hunting is an efficent method of population control. Hunting "improves the environment by keeping the population of deer and other animals in check" according to T.E. In fact, states hire hunters to control current animal populations.

In 2019, Fort Wayne allowed therapeutic hunters in city limits to take care of large deer populations that were causing concerns. According to Wane News Channel, deer reduction zones "target areas that have high deer populations and high human density or use, resulting in concerns about the local ecology, deer-vehicle collisions, and personal property damage."

The selling of hunting licenses provides funding for Indiana conservation efforts. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) states that the Division of Fish and Wildlife is funded by both state and federal funding, but Indiana gains the money for the state portion through the sale of assorted hunting licenses.

Indiana offers many hunting licenses for different types of birds, game and deer. A recent concern is the declining rate of hunting licenses being sold in Indiana. From 2006 to 2016 the number of Indiana hunting licenses dropped by 125,800.

The DNR revealed that the "Indiana Natural Resources Commission approved fee increases to some licenses and permits to ensure [the DNR] can continue to protect Indiana's fish and wildlife resources."

According to Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, state licenses provide about $796 million dollars to conservation efforts, along with another $440 million donated.

Pangolin
COURTESY OF WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

Rifle Hunting
COURTESY OF MISSOURI UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH

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It's a mantra taught repeatedly early on, from Earth Day coloring sheets in kindergarten classes to elementary school assemblies featuring the Dumpster Drummers™ and a recycling talk in the form of song: "Reduce, reuse, recycle" is synonymous with that universal symbol of three chasing arrows.

By now, those recycling rallies have been traded for the occasional poster listing recycling do's and don'ts near the bin that often goes unnoticed in a corner or under a table. Thanks to the custodial staff's routine emptying of waste bins, Homestead High School students don't have to think about what they throw away beyond which container—trash or recycling—to use. Ideally, the plastic water bottles and paper scraps are whisked away to facilities to be inspected, organized and eventually, turned into something brand new. That isn't always the case, though.

THE STATE OF THINGS

According to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), only 19.1% of the state's municipal solid waste was recovered for recycling and composting in 2020. In an interview with WANE, Jodi Leamon, who is Program Manager for the City of Fort Wayne Utility Energy & Sustainability Services, recognized that the state recycling rate is well below Indiana's goal of 50% and that "in Allen County, unfortunately the same is probably true."

Homestead senior Elise Peckinpaugh said, "I've been recycling my whole life, and so it's kind of frustrating to hear that not all of the materials have been recycled, but I'm hoping that if we keep recycling, we'll be able to find better ways to make it recyclable." She added that her family has recycling bins throughout their house, and one way that they reduce waste (and thus the need to recycle) is by using cloth bags in place of plastic grocery bags.

Waste that is not recycled can ultimately end up harming entire ecosystems through the illegal dumping or improper disposal of plastic materials. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, the amount of plastic waste in the ocean increased by about a garbage truck's worth within the last minute. The prevalence of microplastics in marine environments causes irreparable harm to the growth, development and behavior of aquatic creatures.

Making matters worse, China and India, where the U.S. previously exported hundreds of thousands of shipping containers of waste to, have restricted plastic waste imports in recent years. Now, millions of metric tons of waste are exported to countries like Malaysia and Indonesia, fueling waste mismanagement, public health crises and pollution abroad as well as rapidly expanding landfills at home. With this in mind, "reduce, reuse, recycle" becomes more than an Earth Day slogan, transforming into a call for everyday practice.

MAKING CHANGE

Indiana has made slow but steady progress to get to its current recycling rate, which was 11.7% in 2015. The City of Fort Wayne has made improvements over the years as well, most notably with its One Cart Recycling program. The program, which was first announced in 2010 and is still in use, allows residents to place recyclables such as paper, cardboard, glass, aluminum cans and plastics No. 1-7 all in one cart. After collection, workers and machinery at a materials recycling facility separate recyclables (termed "trashy gold" in a City of Fort Wayne "Where Does it Go?" video) from non-recyclables; sort out iron, steel and aluminum for melting down; and make bales of plastic, paper or cardboard to be transported to processors. In just over two years after implementation, the City had increased recycling participation by 42%. Additionally, the program reduced garbage fees by more than $1 million and received the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence in Indiana.

"I feel that the problem is not the program, but how people view and practice recycling," Environmental and Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science teacher and Environmental Club sponsor Stephanie Merkling said. "Many students just put their waste into whichever container is closest, or whichever container they don't have to lift the lid to dispose of their materials. It is really sad that oftentimes such little effort is made to differentiate the containers."

Merkling believes that practices like "wish-cycling" (the recycling of non-recyclable materials, including plastic bags and food-contaminated items) could be reduced through education. This ranges from public service

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ISTOCK

Make change by putting up a poster of the City of Fort Wayne's recycling guidelines!

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signed by HUONG

announcements and signs with recycling reminders to environmental science classes in which students learn about waste management, which is where the three R's come in. In order of environmental friendliness, waste can be reduced, reused, recycled, sent to landfills—where IDEM reported 75% of Indiana waste ended up in 2020—or incinerated to generate energy.

"Basically every plastic material… ever thrown away in every single one of our lifetimes is still present somewhere," Merkling explained, adding that "recycling in and of itself is not the only answer."

She noted that, at Homestead, the custodial staff relocates unused furniture to give items a second life. Merkling also suggested that students print on both sides of the paper as an easy way to reduce waste with the click of a button. Another way that Homestead reduces waste is through the installation of blow dryers instead of paper towel dispensers in student bathrooms. This year, the new water bottle filling station in the 100s hall has discouraged the use of disposable plastic bottles.

Merkling remarked that "we live in a very disposable society," with the affordability of lower-quality and one-use disposable items replacing durability. In 2020, the Plastics Impact Association reported that the plastic industry alone accounted for more than one million jobs and $432 billion in shipments in the United States. Because of this, Merkling said that "it would take a massive movement… from the consumer standpoint to cause change."

DOING THEIR PART

Merkling and her students are working toward change at the individual level. In Environmental Science and AP Environmental Science, students often make small adjustments to their lifestyles to "go green," whether that be reducing waste or actively recycling.

"They share those things and I just love that," Merkling said. "So I'm not saying that what I do or what I present is going to change the world, but it is making a change, even if it's on an individual scale, and that is so rewarding to me."

Senior Amanda Lenfestey, who took AP Environmental Science in her junior year, reduces, reuses and recycles waste at school and in her personal life. Lenfestey said that Merkling's class helped her realize the complexities of the waste management and recycling processes. Now, she is a board member of Environmental Club, and she helps run club activities such as making bags from old t-shirts. Environmental Club also organizes a springtime New to You Sale, which sells donated clothing, furniture and items that would have otherwise been discarded. Last year, the club salvaged items from areas of the school set to be demolished, raising thousands of dollars. What doesn't sell is donated to the Saint Franciscan Center to minimize waste. At home, Lenfestey reduces waste by using reusable shopping bags and food containers.

"My family overall recycles a lot. We recycle about double the amount of items we throw out," Lenfestey said. "Recycling is pretty easy once you get used to it, especially in Fort Wayne and it makes me feel really good about myself. We also make sure to donate items that others could use."

Lenfestey recognizes that "students at [Homestead] try their best," especially when habits like throwing everything away, including recyclables, can be hard to break. Additionally, recycling the wrong items, particularly compostable items, can contaminate recyclable items that would then have to be thrown away. She suggested signs be put up not only near recycling bins but trash bins as well to make students think about whether their waste may be recyclable because "every little bit counts."

Fellow senior and Environmental Club Board member Lucas Gilham similarly advised placing signs near waste bins to address the "lack of awareness on how to properly recycle and what items can be recycled." He claimed that educating students on certain aspects of Homestead's recycling program, including the need to separate the caps from plastic bottles, is key to increasing the recycling rate. A current AP Environmental Science student, Gilham has gained greater insight into human impacts on the environment in the class. In his personal life, Gilham educates himself on recycling guidelines in addition to composting organic waste, "which if done by enough people, helps to reduce the strain on our global agricultural system."

As Gilham said, "everybody should try to reduce, reuse and recycle because these goals help us to live more sustainably, which helps both the environment and our societies." To that end, it might be time to bring the Dumpster Drummers™ and their musical rendition of recycling education to Homestead.

ADOPT, DON'T SHOP: A MISUNDERSTOOD MOTTO

written and designed by
HANNAH SHAW

"Adopt, don't shop" is a campaign popularized by Last Chance for Animals, an organization focused on preventing animal exploitation. Since its emergence in the '80s, "adopt, don't shop" has changed from a movement intended to encourage pet shops to sell rescues instead of animals from commercial breeding facilities into a phrase used to demean any method other than adoption. Applying the saying to all forms of buying animals overlooks the benefits of ethically buying pets from reputable breeders.

With that in mind, there are significant advantages to both adopting and shopping. The best choice for future pet owners is to determine what they want and need from a pet before finding the process that suits them best.

ADOPT

THE PROCESS

Those looking to adopt an animal will find the process fairly simple, beginning with finding a pet to adopt and filling out an application. The shelter will go through the potential adopter's history and criminal records, searching for any red flags such as animal cruelty charges. After meeting with an employee to discuss lifestyle and find a good match, they go over a contract and collect payment. The whole process can take as little as 30 minutes to an hour.

THE BENEFITS

"It's giving them a second chance at life. It's awesome to see those chances happening," said Delaney Atkinson, Community Outreach Coordinator at Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control (FWACC). A majority of the animals within FWACC's shelters come from owner surrender—meaning their owner can no longer take care of them—or are strays brought in by civilians and animal control officers. Essentially, they are animals who have nowhere else to go.

But the animal is not the only one benefiting from the adoption. Caring for a pet makes people feel fulfilled, and those who adopt animals may feel an even stronger sense of pride after saving an at-risk animal. Laura McWilliams (12) adopted her family dog, Jazzy, from a neighbor who had previously saved her from an abusive household. "It makes me feel better that she is living in a better environment than before," said McWilliams. Furthermore, adopted animals are well-known for their unconditional and unending love. "Since she never had anyone show her an ounce of love in her life, she is really protective of us," said McWilliams. The loyalty and attention provided by an adopted animal are unparalleled and sure to leave an adopter with a longtime companion.

Not only does adopting a pet benefit the animal, but it also helps the shelter. Shelters are often the only place an animal can go, and adopting from a shelter opens up space for future abandoned or surrendered animals. "If you're coming in and adopting a dog and giving it a loving home, that is another spot that can be filled by another dog coming in that needs help," said Atkinson. She went on to add that "animals are coming in every day, so the more dogs we're getting out and getting homes, the more time and space we have for dogs coming in."

Essentially, for every animal adopted, another is provided with a temporary home and the opportunity to find a permanent one.

THE DRAWBACKS

Despite the joys of adopting an animal, there is a level of uncertainty about adoption. The immediate concern associated with adopting animals is that they may have behavioral problems. "It is a big task that you're taking on, adopting in general you don't always know entirely what you're getting into. We don't always know the exact history of the animal," said Atkinson. An animal found in a shelter may have a history of abuse or mistreatment, causing the development of difficult-to-manage behaviors. Some dogs, for example, may struggle with food aggression or a general fear of people.

That being said, a good shelter will not leave someone in the dark in terms of how to manage a dog. FWACC, which often runs into dogs with behavioral issues, have dog trainers working within their shelter to best prepare the animal for the home, and will not hesitate to provide as many resources and support systems as possible to a potential new owner.

SHOP

THE PROCESS

The purchasing process is a bit more complicated than adoption. This screening process mimics that of the interviewing process for a job. Someone interested in buying a dog will have to go through multiple interviews after submitting an application before the breeder decides if the applicant is a good fit for the dog. Applicants may also be asked to provide references. Afterward, the buyer will sign a contract agreeing to return the dog if they cannot care for it, promising not to breed the dog and agreeing to a vet evaluation within a few weeks.

THE BENEFITS

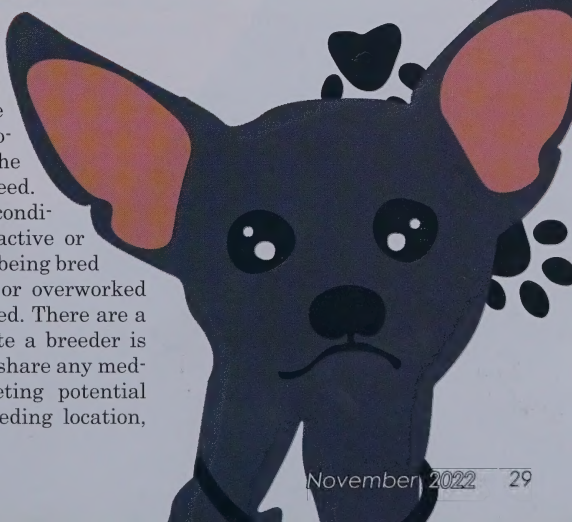
Purchasing a dog from a breeder provides future owners with plenty of options. This includes specific aspects such as breed and age. "We decided to get our dogs from breeders because we wanted puppies," said Claire Keefer (12). Buying from a breeder enables those who have a detailed idea of what kind of lifestyle they wish to live with their pets to have complete control. Additionally, concerns such as allergies to certain breeds or not wanting excessive shedding can be addressed by using a breeder. As long as there is ample communication between the adopter and the breeder, there will be no surprises in terms of what to expect from a dog.

Keefer's family bought two of their dogs from a Columbia City breeder who specializes in miniature Australian Shepherds, meaning they not only knew exactly what kind of dog they were getting, but they also had a history with the person who raised them. "Since we have more than one dog, it was hard to find a dog that could live in an environment with other animals that are adopted just because [adopted dogs] have a tendency to react more," said Keefer. The risk of getting a dog with an unpredictable temperament is significantly lowered when a breeder can create a healthy environment for a growing dog. "The puppies will be exposed to many different sights and sounds at the appropriate age, things like vacuum cleaners, washing machines, different surfaces and objects," said Coggle dog breeder Sue Lascelles in an interview about ethical dog breeding with Rachel Coverdale.

Along with knowing the specifics of how the dog was born and raised, those considering purchasing a dog will know the health history of the dog and its parents. "Their parents will be fully health tested, thus reducing the risk of inherited diseases and defects," said Lascelles. Reputable breeders will only breed dogs who have a healthy history and an acceptable temperament, creating the perfect dog for someone who has concerns about the behavior of a dog.

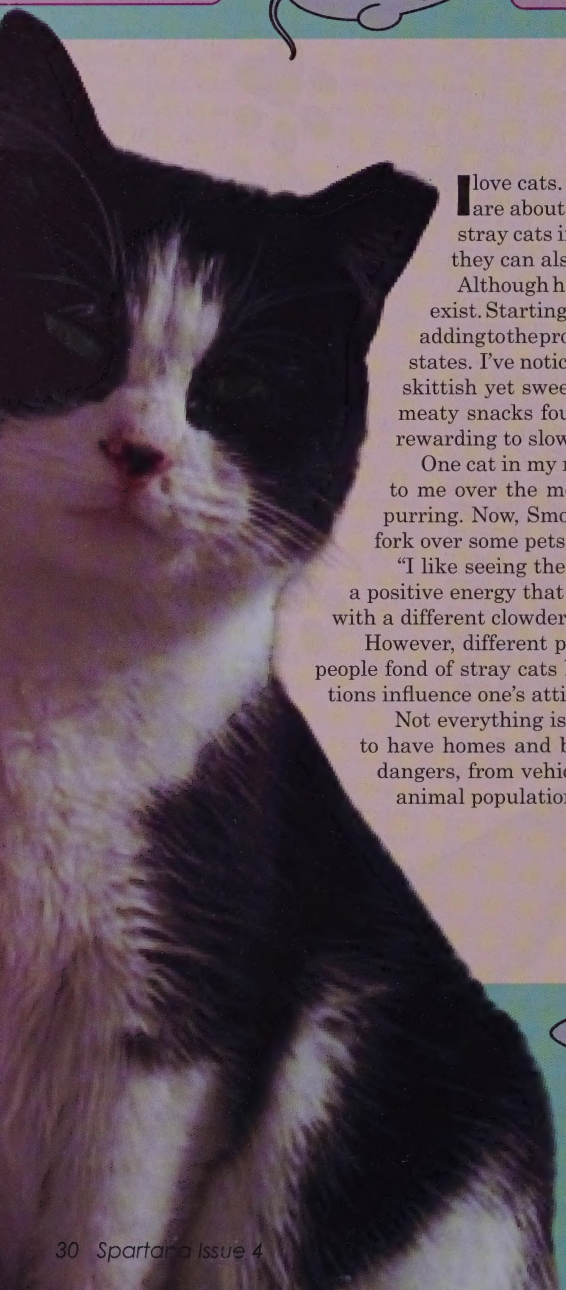
THE DRAWBACKS

As much as breeding dogs can be a good thing, it is incredibly important to make sure the breeder is doing everything in the best interest of the breed. Dogs bred in poor conditions may become reactive or anxious, and the dogs being bred are often mistreated or overworked until they are discarded. There are a few signs that indicate a breeder is unethical: refusing to share any medical history, not meeting potential adopters at their breeding location, not being a part of any parent clubs of their breed, not requiring buyers to sign a contract or having dogs that deviate from breed standards. As long as a breeder can meet these requirements, there should be no anxiety about selecting a good breeder.



an ode to stray cats

written and designed by
GAIA SPLENDORE



I love cats. I have two pet cats myself. According to the Humane Society, there are about 86 million pet cats in America. There's roughly the same number of stray cats in America. I love stray cats. Although feral cats can cause problems, they can also be rewarding community cats.

Although having no unhomed cats at all would be ideal, the reality is that they do exist. Starting as abandoned pets, these animals fend for themselves and reproduce, adding to the problem. It is important to mention that pet abandonment is a crime in most states. I've noticed that I feel a sense of importance that comes with caring for these skittish yet sweet creatures. Leaving out food, whether that be dry cat food or any meaty snacks found in a fridge, is an honorable act of service. It is also incredibly rewarding to slowly get closer to these defensive cats.

One cat in my neighborhood, lovingly named Smokey by my dad, has gotten closer to me over the months. Hissing turned to growling which, with effort, turned into purring. Now, Smokey waits at my front door for wet food. He knows he will have to fork over some pets for it, but he is accepting of the deal.

"I like seeing the cats around the neighborhood," said Leo Walker (12). "They bring a positive energy that all animals carry." Walker also lives in my neighborhood, but runs with a different clowder of cats, one being a tabby named Paulie.

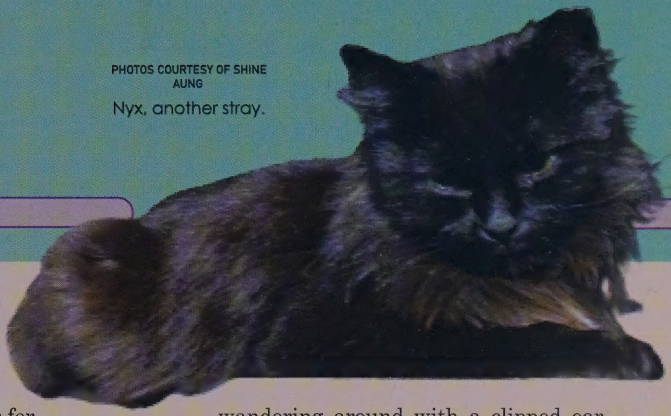
However, different people have different opinions on stray cats. I've realized that most people fond of stray cats have their own cats, so I understand how previous feline predilections influence one's attitude towards strays.

Not everything is sweet for these animals. To start, it would be better for these cats to have homes and be socialized with humans. Being on the streets is full of its own dangers, from vehicles to diseases to starvation. They also have a big impact on local animal populations.

Judith standing.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHINE AUNG

Nyx, another stray.



For instance, birds and rodents are often dinner for these hungry cats. In just one year in America, outdoor cats killed an estimated 2.4 billion birds. Notably, it is very hard to control the stray cat population, as they are rarely spayed/neutered and often reproduce.

There are ways to help these animals. For non-feral cats (animals that are socialized and could live indoors) people can call a shelter and see if there is available room for another cat.

There are also ways to help feral cats, mainly by helping control their population and chance of illness. This is were Trap-Neuter-Return programs come in.

TNR is a process often offered by local animal control and shelters in which feral cats are trapped, neutered and returned to where they were found. Humane Fort Wayne offers this service. The goal of TNR programs is to stop stray cats from reproducing while keeping them in the safest environment for them, which ironically is the streets. This not only stops their ability to make more stray cats, but also gives them vaccines and medical care before they are returned. If you ever see a cat wandering around with a clipped ear, they were most likely TNRed!

Caring for these cats takes effort. I would argue that it's worth it. My boyfriend cares for his share of stray cats. One was named Judith.

"She showed up one night. She was friendly, I started feeding her, and we formed a companionship. She basically became our outdoor cat," said Shine Aung.

However, Judith was sick, and after taking her to the vet we learned she had feline leukemia. Caring for these cats is hard, but knowing Judith went warm and loved is rewarding enough.

Stray cats originated from human error, so it's only fair that we help solve the problem. Animals shelters like Human Fort Wayne almost always need volunteers and donations, and even just keeping these kitties in your mind helps the cause.

Group of stray cats (mom and kittens) eating from a recycled skateboard tray.

Animals in Pop C

written by
STELLA GRABLE
designed by Azalea Orsini

Mothers, children, vagabonds and businessmen alike lined the streets of 1970s London, all looking to the sky as if the heavens had emerged. Their eyes glistened as they gazed upon a seemingly materialized fable. Heads turned up, they watched as a pig floated along the skyline. The photographers of the British rock band Pink Floyd scrambled to get the perfect shot—unknowingly capturing what would become one of the most infamous images of political music history.

The origin of using animals as symbolic representations of humanity dates back much further than the '70s. One of the most well-known interpretations of this concept was executed in George Orwell's 1945 novel *Animal Farm*. Orwell uses imagery of Animalia to portray a drunken communist society, further commenting on how he believes society is headed toward Stalinism. The infamous and chilling last line of the novel sums up his entire message: "The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again, but already it was impossible to say which was which." Orwell's concept of comparing man to pig was influential, specifically credibly in not only literature but in pop culture overall.

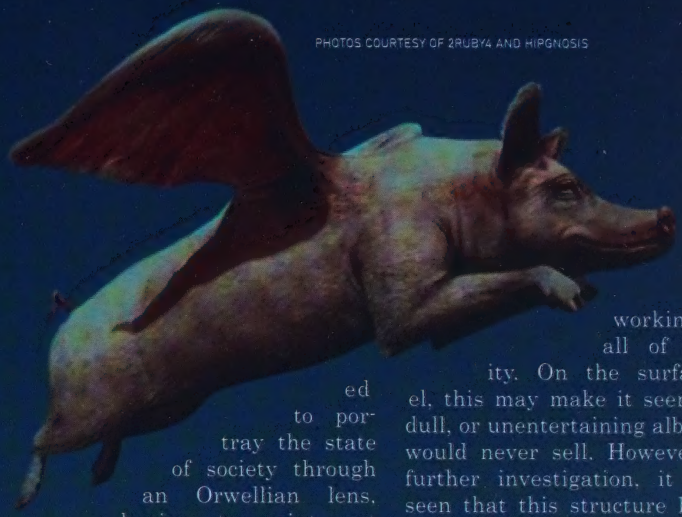
The '70s were all about the resurgence of old ideas in combination with the emergence of new ones. Counterculture, an anti-war movement in the late '60s that spiraled into a cry for American reform, pulled ideas from all time periods, walks of life and countries. It argued that although America had come to a period of stagnancy in its hypocritical capitalist concepts, periods of reform had occurred throughout history. The movement was fostered by college students, as well as the emerging musicians of the time, both of whom created a mutualistic relationship of sorts. Musicians sought to portray the new ideas of the period through art, which in turn created countless anthems for the youth's mainstream cries for rebellion against old ideas. It is not uncommon for musicians to portray the political climate of a time period—using their art as a form of protest, or documentation of history. Oftentimes, music is a great indicator of the human condition in a time period. During the late '60s and early '70s, American music was booming with the emergence of new sub-genres of rock. This was reflective of the emergence of new ideas and reform in American culture. Like America as a whole, up until the '60s, musical ideas and genres had become dull with reuse—the four-by-four timing of general rock had simply been overused. Thus, when the Beatles brought Swinging London, the progressive ideas of '50s London, to America during the ultimate time of controversy with the Vietnam War, a flame was ignited, and American musical culture boomed. Not only did new American bands emerge, but, for the first time, British bands' popularity surged overseas.

One of the most well-known of these British bands was Pink Floyd. Already well-established by the '70s due to their 1969 studio album *Ummagumma* that catapulted them to the spotlight of psychedelic rock in Great Britain and the United States, Pink Floyd became one of the most polarizing bands of the period.

College kids loved them, declaring their overtly political sentiments to be representative of the new generation. Parents, however, believed that Pink Floyd was spoiling the minds of the young. The band's 1977 release of their album titled *Animals* did nothing but feed the fire. *Animals* consists of only five tracks, each being dutifully named after Animalia. The album begins with a

Culture

PHOTOS COURTESY OF 2RUBY4 AND HIPGNOSIS



ting track titled "Pigs on the Wing, Part 1," followed by the hefty 17-minute "Dogs," then the atmospheric "Pigs (Three Different Ones)," followed by "Sheep" and finally the album concludes with a track spanning only one minute and 26 seconds, titled "Pigs on the Wing, Part 2."

This album is perhaps one of the prime examples of a concept album, which sticks to a metaphor or storyline in an attempt to convey an ultimate theme. They're essentially a novel in the form of an album, and although they do not have to, they often are used to comment on profound subjects.

Floyd's *Animals* aimed to adapt Orwell's Animal Farm into a period-relevant musical score. While *Animal Farm* critiques Stalinism through its comparison of man to pig, *Animals* is a critique of the ideologies and corruption of late 20th-century democracy. The album primarily discusses the ways in which undemocratic structures in democracy divide individuals within society into factions. If you're confused, think of basic United States history: James Madison-type factions. Essentially, Roger Waters, the bass guitarist and primary composer of the album, attempted to portray the state of society through an Orwellian lens, hoping to point out humanity's hypocrisies by reducing the listeners to animals.

While Orwell indicates his opinions by diminishing humanity to multiple animal types, Waters takes it further with this album and reduces all classes of society to three types: the pigs represent the ruling class; the almost omnipotent powers of capitalism, soaring above the rest of society. The dogs are the second class of vicious higher-ups; they're the "top dogs," whose sole job is to keep the rest of us in line. And finally, the sheep are the mindless following masses; the sheep are us and we are the sheep, as Orwell would say.

The simplicity of this album is what makes it brilliant. It's composed of only five tracks, the longer ones containing extended stretches of ambient instrumentation. It uses only three species to dictate the inter-workings of all of humanity. On the surface level, this may make it seem like a dull, or unentertaining album that would never sell. However, upon further investigation, it can be seen that this structure lends itself incredibly well to the album.

Its bleakness makes it approachable; it makes it easy to spoon-feed to the majority of the public. The entire concept of the album is that society is dumb, deaf and blind to its own problems. And so, by creating something so seemingly simple and easy to listen to, Floyd was able to almost indoctrinate the listener into their train of thought, amplifying their complex sentiments and hopefully forcing the listener into comprehension. This is no complicated Rush album, filled with unpalatable time scores, 13 tracks and illogical metaphors. No, Pink Floyd makes it impossible to not see their point. The album itself is so incredibly simple, but the concepts it conveys are filled with a multitude of complexities. And that kids, that is the key to creating a musical masterpiece that will be regarded as one of the best concept albums of all time, even 45 years after its release.

BIGFOOT OR BIG FAKE?

SASQUATCH SIGHTINGS

written and designed by
KAITLYN FRY

In 1811, the existence of Bigfoot was first questioned. In 2018, one filmmaker took the Canadian government to court because of his belief in Bigfoot. In 2008 two men claimed to find the body of Bigfoot.

Sasquatch, Bigfoot, Yeren, Yeti and Yowie: there are many different names for the same creature. While some people describe Bigfoot as a hairy apeman-like creature, others think it is a species. Bigfoot is said to be anywhere from six feet to 15 feet tall and 793.6 pounds. Most footprints that are reportedly from Bigfoots are 19 inches. The creatures are most often said to live in the northwest United States and western Canada. However, there have been thousands of sightings in the forested areas of Washington, California, Pennsylvania, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Oregon and Texas.

The legend of Bigfoot began in the late 1800s and continued into the 1900s. In 1958, Andrew Genzoli, a journalist for the Humboldt Times, received a letter claming the discovery of strangely large footprints. Genzoli wrote, "Maybe we have a relative of the Abominable Snowman of the Himalayas," in one of his articles, publishing the letter next to it. He thought that it would be just another "good Sunday morning story." However, Genzolis' feature intrigued readers, leading him and his coworker Betty Allen to publish follow-up articles about the footprints giving the creature the name of "Bigfoot."

In the 1930s in western Canada, J.W. Burns invented the term "Sasq'ets," meaning "wild man" or "hairy man"; the word "sasquatch" is believed to be an English alter of the Salish word "Sasq'ets." Many Canadian Bigfoot hunters have been trying to prove that the creature is real with alleged encounters and physical proof including hair, bones or a body.

Filmmaker Todd Standing claimed that his first sighting of Sasquatch was in 2005 and said that it dramatically changed his life. He believes that the Bigfoot species is trying to communicate with people through broken trees other signs that they leave behind. Standing went to court in 2018 to sue the government because they were "failing to protect Sasquatch habitat." He lost the case.

John Willison Green, a Canadian journalist and author of some Sasquatch books, found many articles claiming that Bigfoot is real. Green then collected an index of 1,340 Sasquatch sightings. According to Greens' index of sightings, Bigfoot is believed to possess superhuman speed and strength. Some reports observe that the creature is able to swim as well. A man in British Columbia recorded a video supposedly of Sasquatch in the Tantalus Mountain range; the creature seemed to be moving swiftly up a slope of a snow-covered mountain.

In the 1970s, filmmakers created documentaries and other films that were investigating his existence portrayed him as a sexual predator. In the 1980s, the media finally showed Bigfoot's softer side. Joshua Buh, the author of "Bigfoot: The Life and Times of a Legend," said that he became "associated with environmentalism and a symbol of the wilderness that we need to preserve." One example is the movie, "Harry and the Hendersons," which represented Bigfoot as a misunderstood and kind creature. After people realized that Bigfoot could be more than scary, filmmakers started to make more movies about him, including "Bigfoot Family," "Missing Link" and "Small Foot." These movies portrayed Bigfoot as a misunderstood and curious creature.

Footprint reportedly from Bigfoot in Ontario, Canada.
PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLIAM BROOKS

A mold of a footprint from Bluff Creek, California

Photo Courtesy of Irfan Khan/Los Angeles Times by Getty Images

Mathew Whitton and Rick Dyer, a pair of Bigfoot-hunters claimed that they found Bigfoot's body in a wooded area. They would not give the exact place that they found it, which raised some suspicions. They promised more proof including a video and a DNA test. After Whitton and Dyer found Bigfoot, they put him in a deep freezer. When Bigfoot defrosted, it turned out to be a rubber body. Whitton and Dyer later on confessed that it was all a hoax.

Tessa Bayless (10) does not believe that Bigfoot is real; she believes that "it's just a stupid story someone made up." She also doesn't find "blurry photos and giant footprints people use as evidence convincing in the slightest" because it would be just as easy to make up evidence. Bayless thinks that there is just too big of a possibility for people to make it up.

While Bayless knows that Bigfoot is not real, Kye Edwards (10) does not know if they believe in Bigfoot or not. Edwards says that if the creature is real, they "do not know why we are so adamant about finding the creature and chasing after him. is a part of nature, and it's best if nature is not disturbed." If it turns out he isn't real, they believe that "it's still a story that would be fun to talk about like people talk about Santa or the Easter Bunny existing." Grey Sheets (10) believes that Bigfoot is real because they believe that "anything is really possible."

Taken by Roger Patterson in Eureka, California

PHOTO COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

Screenshot from an alleged 'Bigfoot' video from 2010

NEXT ISSUE: LOCH NESS MONSTER

Monster of the lakes is said to be a sea monster with a long neck, bumps on its back and four fins. Where did the myth originate? Who has seen it? And most importantly, is it real?

Agent Domino

Issue Two

Designed by CLAIRE HOUSER
Written by GRACE HENSLEY

Agent Domino!
We meet again.
Spite.
I see you've recovered from our last encounter.
...
I daresay I have.
Well, seeing as how the Inferna is going to use it to unleash unknown horrors onto the world,
I'm gonna say...
No.
Enough chitchat. Hand over the artifact.
Can't let you and your Central Intelligence Trac
I suppose we'll have to take it by force then.
How many times have I told you to just call it C.I.T.A.D.E.L?
Aw, not even for me?
- snap -
Shall we?

Trip
She zoomin
Get up, get up! After her!
Quentin, I need an evac, stat!
Agent Tortoise is waiting for you. You just need to make it to the bridge.
On it.

Grip
yeet
Adios.
Jump
Catch
Land
LONDON BRIDGE
Quentin, I could really use that evac about now.
Where's Tortoise?
Skidd

Jump.
Jump?! That's-
Are you crazy?! It's gotta be at least a 30-foot drop to the water!
Hand it over, Domino. You've lost.
Water
Wait-

Jump into more articles *cold turkey* at hhsspartana.com...

the Spartana

Issue 5 December 2022

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GRAPHIC COURTESY OF ISTOCK

Leditor (letter from the editors)

Dear Reader,

Jack Frost begins to nip on the walks to and from the student lot as erratic foggy mornings, rainy days and dust-induced fire alarms make their way to Homestead High School. Cozy up from the bitter cold with a steaming cup of hot cocoa (or tea, if you prefer) and crack open the *Spartana*.

With just a few days left until winter break, this issue of the *Spartana* is one of reflection, whether in the form of a nostalgiac overview of beloved holiday items or a recap of World Cup politics. We invite you to learn about the holiday traditions of spotlighted Homestead Spartans, and we bring you coverage of popular winter festivities as well as unique local businesses that give back. We bring light to the debates over Barbie and Bratz; the mythical Loch Ness Monster "Nessie"; and final exams. Also included is the riveting third issue of *Agent Domino*. Finally, we look beyond the wintertime "season of giving" to the year-round needs of the impoverished and homeless populations of Fort Wayne.

In partnership with HHS In Depth and Homestead Yearbook staff, the *Spartana* is hosting an Eliminate Illiteracy Donation Drive for The Literacy Alliance this month and next. Support the organization's empowerment of people and strengthening of the community through education because, as their mission states, "literacy changes lives." See the list of needed items and dropoff locations on page 9 or at shorturl.at/HIRTW.

Happy reading,
Madeline Phuong and Ganga Subramanian

Farewell to...

Melody Thrasher (12), who has dedicated three semesters to the *Spartana*.

Julia Gayer (12), who has dedicated two semesters to the *Spartana*.

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Cover by AZALEA ORSINI
Table of Contents by MADELINE PHUONG

FIFA: EVERYTHING BUT THE SOCCER

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

Held this year in a small country on the Arabian Peninsula, the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) estimated that by the end of the tournament nearly five billion people will have watched World Cup Qatar 2022.

While the games themselves are centered around the sport of soccer as outlined by their motto, "for the good of the game," the World Cup plays a significant role in facilitating international relations. This year, the games take place in Qatar, a semi-constitutional monarchy that has been criticized for human rights abuses. Alongside the host country, FIFA has also come under fire for accusations of corruption and bribery regarding the fairness of their bidding process for host countries. If the World Cup is a plane, the controversies and disputes that darken the World Cup Qatar 2022 can be considered turbulence.

In spending nearly $220 billion, Qatar has built eight stadiums, an airport expansion, several new hotels, a new metro system, a shipping port and a new planned city (Lusail, a development home to 200,000 people) in merely 12 years. Some of these projects were already under construction during the 2010 announcement and were simply sped up to meet the population's needs for a World Cup—a feat that would have otherwise been impossible if it were not for Qatar's Kafala, or sponsorship, system that allows businesses and individuals to employ and monitor migrant workers. Normally, workers need their sponsor's permission to take any major action, which makes migrant workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation under their sponsor's absolute control. While Qatar has made significant reforms to its Kafala system since 2010, reforms that now allow workers to leave the country or transfer jobs without permission from their sponsor, the system still provides the sponsors an inordinate amount of power over their workers.

It is difficult to know precisely how many migrant workers have died in the construction of Qatar's new developments. *The Guardian* contacted five neighboring countries—India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka—and confirmed that at least 6,570 migrant workers have died since the initial announcement. It is largely believed that this is an undercount of deaths on the construction of World Cup infrastructure since dozens of other countries send migrant workers to Qatar. This statistic is further called into question since it is common practice for Qatar officials to attribute migrant workers' deaths to "natural causes," which prevents the family of the worker to receive any compensation.

Media coverage of the men's World Cup has also soured due to Qatari regulations. Journalists are barred from criticizing the Emir (the leader of their monarchy), spreading "fake" news and blaspheming Islam. The press reporting on the sporting event are restricted as to where and when they can film. There have already been incidents between Qatari law enforcement and journalists—a Danish television crew attempting to film the streets of Doha was interrupted by security and threatened with breaking their equipment—and many more are assumed to arise. Reporters Without Borders, an international nonprofit dedicated to safeguarding the freedom of speech, have denounced these restrictions.

Western sports journalists traveling to Doha to provide coverage on the men's World Cup have expressed difficulty adhering to Qatari rules on expression. "It's not supposed to be like this," said Barney Ronay, chief sports writer for *The Guardian*. He describes the level of hostility between fans, journalists and host country to be unlike any other World Cup he has reported on prior, making it increasingly difficult for the media to report on the sport without addressing politics.

Sam Stejskal, reporter for *The Athletic*, finds similar issue in covering the World Cup. He recalled a training session for the US team that he attended during his first week in Doha where players and coaches met with migrant workers. It was a meet-and-greet to show gratitude for the contributions workers made in constructing the infrastructure that made the World Cup possible. Although a joyful event on the surface, Stejskal found it hard to "separate the art from the artist" when knowing the context behind the "art."

While many agree that it is important to publicize the wrongdoings of countries, some have noticed a trend of Western hypocrisy in the media when it comes to reporting on the Qatar World Cup. In an analysis conducted by author and associate professor Marc

U.S. goalkeeper Mike Turner celebrates goal during match against Iran.

PIHOTO COURTESY OF DAN MULLAN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CNN

Qatar's FIFA World Cup mascot La'eeb, which in Arabic means super-skilled player.

Owen Jones, seven U.K. news outlets (*The Guardian, The Times, Daily Express, The Sun, Daily Mail, The Telegraph,* and *Metro U.K.*) have named Qatar 1,735 times in their headlines. 685 of these articles also mention the words "World Cup" in their headlines, of which 454 were critical, 201 were neutral and 33 were positive. Comparing this to the press during the Russian World Cup, a larger nation that also faced criticism for human rights abuse and exploitation at the time only had 3% of all articles during the time of the announcement to the hosting that mentioned the adverse event alongside the term "World Cup." Ronay, in support of the U.K. not boycotting the Russian World Cup in 2018, wrote, "No nation has a monopoly on acts of brutality, which history suggests are pretty evenly shared around." Reporting on human rights abuses and restrictions on free speech is incredibly important, but nuance and tact are required to handle sensitive topics.

Qatar, while under fire for a multitude of reasons, is not the only body subject to scrutiny in the World Cup.

It is no secret that the World Cup is one of the most lucrative and publicized sporting events in the world. For Qatar, the World Cup brings a small nation the political visibility it needs to play a larger role in the international landscape, and for FIFA, hosting in the Middle East gives them the chance to dip into a lucrative market full of rich oligarchs. When FIFA first made the announcement in 2010, it was first met with cheers, and then speculation. Qatar faced near-impossible odds for the bid. For one, Qatar's soccer team had never qualified for the World Cup before and was up against soccer powerhouses like Japan, Australia and the United States. Normally, the World Cup is held during the summer, but Qatar's summer temperatures can often reach over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, making it a largely unsuitable location for a sporting event. The small country stands out as an anomaly against a backdrop of the soccer powerhouses that have previously hosted the World Cup, causing many to attribute the choice as a result of bribery and corruption.

In defense of the vote results, former FIFA president Sepp Blatter said, "The Arabic world deserves a World Cup. They have 22 countries and have not had any opportunity to host the tournament before."

Since 2010, several claims of bribery and corruption have been confirmed. By 2014, it was discovered that prominent Qatari soccer official Mohammed bin Hammam allegedly handed out millions in bribes to FIFA officials to secure the Qatari bid. In 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice arrested seven FIFA officials accused of racketeering, wire fraud and money laundering in their quest to sell broadcast rights to the tournament. Even Blatter was not immune as Switzerland's investigation into FIFA's wrongdoing charged Blatter with criminal fraud, but he was acquitted soon after. He resigned during the legal chaos.

Despite these accusations and fresh evidence in 2020 that three FIFA officials may have received bribes from unnamed parties to vote for Qatar, these criminal investigations have not found the smoking gun needed to prove for certain that there was wrongdoing in the vote.

This is more important than ever as there is evidence to suggest that American interest in soccer is steadily growing. In a report by *Telemundo*, high school soccer participation has grown by 32% from 2002 to 2019, even surpassing American football. Major League Soccer (MLS) has observed a 25% increase in audience attendance this season from last season.

Homestead students are also feeling a new interest in a sport often overshadowed by its more flashy compatriots, basketball and football. Basketball fan Britton Shumard (11) said that he "was really excited when (USMNT) advanced to the Round of 16." Interest is only set to rise in 2026 when the FIFA World Cup is slated to be jointly hosted for the first time in World Cup history between Mexico, Canada and the United States in 16 cities across the North American continent. While expressing praise at how soccer manages to be exhilarating even with its low scoring, Hunter Specht (12) encapsulated the current American viewpoint: "It's soccer, not football."

Serbia's Sergej Milinković-Savić celebrates a goal in a draw against Cameroon.

Students dance at the "Northern Lights" themed Semiformal

Semiformal

designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

Check out the Semiformal spread in the 2022-2023 yearbook! Order one for $50 at yearbooksforever.com.

Fort Wayne Winter Festivities

written by
ISABELLA AMBROSE AND YEVVA IRELAND
designed by
SAMUEL COLE

Nutcracker Performances

Every holiday season, Fort Wayne Ballet performs their version of The Nutcracker. Tabitha Wolf (10) has performed in The Nutcracker for almost 10 years now. She believes The Nutcracker "could really become a family tradition for many families." She stated that "every year, Fort Wayne Ballet adds more detail and energy to the production. For example, this year, new costumes are being added and the choreography is tweaked." The Nutcracker offers an aesthetically pleasing show that can brighten up your holiday spirit. Tickets can be found on Fort Wayne Ballet's website.

Downtown Activities

The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory is offering many festive gifts in their conservatory shop, along with many Christmas themed days and beautiful light displays. Their gardens offer displays of poinsettias and lights every evening until the December 23.

The Fantasy of Lights, located in Franke Park, offers a holiday light display. It features over 140 winter scenes along a two-mile road that can be enjoyed from the warmth of your car. Admission is $10 for personal vehicles and $20 for commercial vans. The Fantasy of Lights displays are up until December 31.

Fort Wayne Mueseum Of Art

The Fort Wayne Museum of Art (FWMOA) is an enjoyable place to indulge yourself in the arts. An interview with Kaitlin Binkley and Colleen Huddleson, staff members at FWMOA, revealed that they are expecting two new exhibits; Indiana Waterways: The Art of Conservation, and Fired Up: New Vistas in Ceramics. Binkley and Huddleson stated that "art is an incredibly individual experience," and they pursue the goal of being a "safe space for people to experience anything, everything, or even nothing as they view the different artwork we display." There are many downtown art displays to explore this season that can bring a new perspective to the new year.

New Restaurants

Dae Gee is a new Korean BBQ restaurant coming to Fort Wayne in early 2023. Rick Evans, owner of Evans Toyota, and Sam Choe, the dealership manager, signed a franchise agreement with Dae Gee. After the restaurant was highlighted on Guy Fieri's show, "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives," the owners of Dae Gee hope to open 10 new restaurants nationwide. Dae Gee will have traditional Korean meats, fish or vegetarian options that can be enjoyed in a bowl, stone pot or lettuce wrap. It will be located at 4910 N. Clinton Street.

Fort Wayne Winter Market

Do you miss the summer farmers' market on Barr Street? Well, you're in luck: Fort Wayne's winter market will fulfill all your farmers market needs. Located at The Olde East End Building, the winter market occurs every Saturday until April 29. The winter market is an indoor market that hosts local businesses and vendors. The market has everything from produce to baked goods to artwork. There's something there for everyone.

Looking for Something Free?

Get your family together and bake some sweet treats, like cookies or other festive desserts, or embrace your inner child and go play in the snow. You're never too old to build a snowman, have a snowball fight or build a snow fort. Greta Knecht (9) revealed she enjoys "sledding down [her] Grandma's hill." Just like many others, Knecht cherishes this winter activity "because it is a family tradition." If you are struggling to find an activity for the winter, new family traditions can always be created.

SPARTAN SPOTLIGHT: HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

written and designed by
ALESSIA PASSONI, PEYTON HOFFER & LUKE LAND

JACOB COHEN

Jacob Cohen celebrates the holidays because it is a fun way for him to spend time with his family and close friends. He hangs out with his extended family from out of town and they enjoy a large lunch or dinner depending on the time of their get-together. His mom makes larges amounts of chile and other appetizers are brought to share. His favorite dish by far is a 7-layer Mexican dip that consists of beans, cheese, salsa, guacamole, cheese, black olives, sour cream and jalapenos. In addition, he enjoys the ham that his grandma makes.

Although he loves receiving gifts, he loves giving them, too. Jacob remembers one of the gifts he gave someone, " My mom found a ring from her grandmother that no one could find for a long time, and then we all gave it to her mom, my grandmother, as a present, and she started crying."

Jacob is also Jewish and celebrates Hanukkah with his family where a lot of food is shared and gifts are exchanged. He also enjoys going shopping to look for good deals once the holidays are over.

EDIE LAURIE

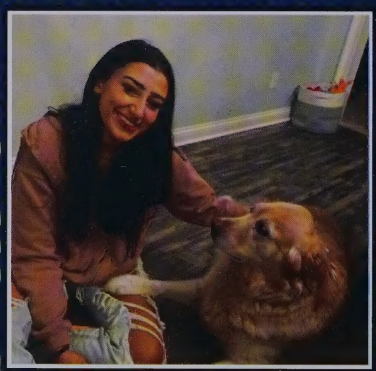
Edie celebrates the holidays to dedicate it to those she loves most and celebrates by spending time with her family. She gathers around for dinner, games and all sorts of fun. Edie loves giving gifts as she enjoys surprising people with something they would enjoy without them asking for it. She said, "It is more rewarding to make someone else happier by giving a gift than to receive one."

Although Edie loves giving gifts, she loves receiving gifts too. Her favorite gift was her dog, Snoopy. He's a very important part of her life. Edie also loves exchanging gifts with her mom's whole family. They pick numbers out of a hat in order to determine when they pick a gift. You either have the option to steal someone's gift or take it from the tree. Edie enjoys being last because you can choose which gift you end up with.

Not only does Edie love spending the holidays with her family, but she also enjoys the food. Her mom makes the best-salted caramel brownies, Heath Bar crunch and Butterfinger cookies. Edie said that her favorite childhood memory was "getting a card with a picture of a puppy in it. My dad then told my siblings and I that he had gotten a puppy and we would be able to go get him in two weeks." Edie also enjoys skiing, sledding and snowball fights in addition to her family fun.

SOPHIA WULLIMAN

Sophia Wulliman celebrates the holidays as a time to show appreciation for those she cares about and as a way to spend time with her friends and family. She loves to give gifts and celebrates Christmas with her mom by opening gifts, having brunch, typically French toast with toppings, eggs, with a side of bacon and with her dad by having dinner with her grandparents and extended family, and reading a Christmas story. One of Sophia's favorite holiday traditions is to go to the local Night of Lights festival with a warm cup of hot cocoa and afterward head to Parkview Field to watch the fireworks. Sophia celebrates the holidays because "December 25th marks the anniversary of God sending His son into the world."



ELIMINATE ILLITERACY DRIVE

written by
MADELINE PHUONG
designed by Azalea Orsini

"We've recently updated our mission and it starts out with, 'Literacy changes lives.' And it truly does because literacy is a gateway out of poverty," Melinda Haines, CEO of nonprofit The Literacy Alliance, said. "[It's] a gateway to a better job because that better job allows [people who are earning a high school equivalency diploma or learning English] to earn more money and to provide for their families."

Through Project Graduate and Project Connect, The Literacy Alliance respectively provides free educational resources and support for the 30,000 adults without a high school diploma and the 40,000 adults for whom English is not a first language in Fort Wayne. Both year-round, adult-education programs consist primarily of people who are low- to moderate-income. Haines explained that "so many people who come to us have all of these barriers, which are keeping them in poverty," including lack of access to transportation, stable housing and child care. The Literacy Alliance refers its students to nonprofit organizations like Community Harvest Food Bank and Blue Jacket Clothing Company.

In addition, the organization's Project READS helps boost reading levels of children in kindergarten through grade 3. While reading proficiency levels decline nationwide in recent years, the program has expanded to 15 sites and 113 volunteers as of Dec. 5, 2022. By strengthening reading levels at the elementary school level, The Literacy Alliance increases the likelihood of its students graduating from high school. In fact, a long-term Annie E. Casey Foundation study reported that students who lacked reading proficiency in the third grade "were four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers."

Haines noted that, across the board, "need is continuing to increase." In the past few years, Project Connect has grown from six students to more than 80 students.

Haines herself joined The Literacy Alliance as a volunteer on the Board of Directors before becoming the organization's CEO in January 2020. During her time as board member and CEO, Haines discovered that "one of the neatest things is to find out who the students are... What I've learned is that no student comes to us with the same story as another student."

For those interested in making an impact through The Literacy Alliance, Project READS accepts high school students looking to commit about an hour weekly throughout the school year. More information, including the volunteer application, is available at www.fwliteracyalliance.org.

"We are grateful for any and all support that anybody can give us, even if it's just knowing who we are and referring people to us," Haines said.

Needed Items Include...

Gallon Bags	Flash Cards	Highlighters	Sandwich Bags
Pencils	Batteries	Dry Erase	K-Cup Pods
Copy Paper	Notebooks	Whiteboards	5x8 Notepads
Paper Towels	Tissue Boxes	Tea Bags	Trash Liners

Homestead Media is partnering with the Fort Wayne Literacy Alliance to give teachers the supplies they need to end illiteracy. **Bring in items for donation until January 13!**

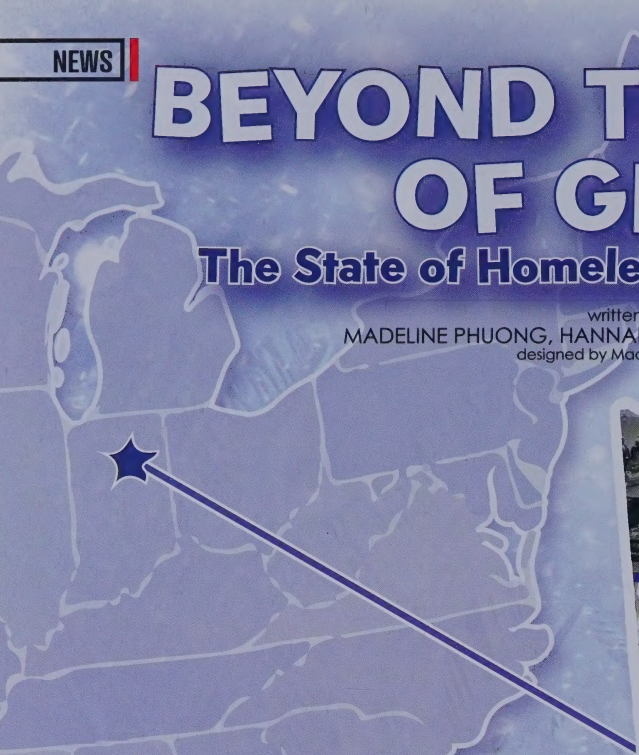
WATCH THE LATEST EPISODE OF HHS IN DEPTH AT YOUTUBE.COM/@HOMESTEADHIGHSCHOOLMEDIA TO HEAR ABOUT THE LITERACY ALLIANCE AND THE DONATION DRIVE.

Drop off at bins near the Main Office, Freshman Academy Office, Attendance, and Student Services.

BEYOND THE SEASON OF GIVING

The State of Homelessness in Fort Wayne

written by
MADELINE PHUONG, HANNAH SHAW & ELENA MORENO
designed by Madeline Phuong



From *A Christmas Carol* to *The Grinch*, the winter season is characterized by a swell in holiday spirit, and acts of charity abound. In fact, according to Nonprofit Source, 30% of charitable donations made by Americans are collected during the month of December, 10% of which are made on the last three days of the year. At The Rescue Mission in Fort Wayne, anywhere from 40-50% of the organization's revenue and volunteers typically come from the holiday season.

According to James Weyant, a professor of Psychology at the University of San Diego, this disproportionate amount of giving comes from strong feelings of empathy that arise during the holiday season. When people spend more time with their families, they are more inclined to spend money on others, whether that be family members and friends or charitable organizations.

The holiday season has been deemed the "Season of Giving," a time for people to think not only of themselves but also of those in need of support, financial or otherwise. This is especially evident in the creation of Giving Tuesday, a global movement inspiring people to donate. Giving Tuesday falls on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving and was created in 2012 as a way to counteract the excessive spending of Black Friday and Cyber Monday by encouraging charitable, tax-deductible donations.

During these times, people generally like to define themselves as charitable, feeling good for giving a dollar to a homeless person holding a sign. However, this does not address the problems at the root of poverty and the inequalities that exist among America's existing homeless population.

For example, the 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Re-

port to Congress found that Black people make up 13% of the American population, yet 40% of the national homeless population. American Indians/Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and multiracial people also make up a disproportionate percentage of the homeless population in the United States. A 2018 study by Dr. Matthew Morton at the University of Chicago reported a homelessness rate of 16% for LGBTQ+ youth of color, double that of white LGBTQ+ youth.

There is no doubt that making donations, monetary or otherwise, during the winter is commendable and beneficial, but homelessness, food insecurity and poverty—whether in Fort Wayne or across the United States—do not go away with the new year.

Increasing Need

"There's a huge need within this community and the need [is] not going away anytime soon," said Blake Douglas, the Senior Director of Marketing and Events at The Rescue Mission, which estimated about 3,000 individuals in a homeless or near homeless crisis in Fort Wayne and the surrounding area.

Although the National Alliance to End Homelessness reported a 28.9% decrease in the Indiana homeless population between 2008 and 2018, homelessness and food insecurity have remained prevalent in Fort Wayne. In fact, The Rescue Mission Foundation set a record of serving 5,000 grab-and-go Thanksgiving meals on November 23, 2022 with the help of nearly 100 volunteers; this was double the number of meals served in November of 2020.

Douglas said that within the Rescue Mission Foundation's facilities, "we're serving three times the normal amount of individuals that we were serving at our old building at this time of year." He attributed this increased need to "external circumstances," such as higher inflation rates and costs of living. Shepherd's House, which provides aid in employment, counseling and reform to homeless veterans, has dealt with similar impacts. Co-founder Barbara Cox observed, "This year, in light of the economy... the usual flow of donation items [has] trickled in."

This trend of increasing costs has not been limited to just this year. According to Family Promise, median renter income rose about 5%, while median rent rose 61% between 1960 and 2016. In order to afford an average-priced two-bedroom apartment in the U.S., a renter must make $24.90 an hour, which is over three times the current federal minimum wage. In light of this, it's clear why lack of affordable housing, unemployment and poverty are the three most-cited reasons for family homelessness nationwide.

Douglas explained that at The Rescue Mission, "the number one" cause of homeless crises "is actually broken relationships. It's not having that support system that so many of us are used to when growing up." At Shepherd's House, the most common cause of homelessness among Fort Wayne's veteran population is strikingly similar: "Veterans [lose] hope" and their system of support, often "due to their abuse of drugs and alcohol."

"They are broken and don't know how to start putting the pieces together again," Cox said. "We remind them that they are Veterans—they have served to protect this country and now it's our turn to serve and honor them."

Without the help of family members and loved ones, recovery from unemployment, addiction or other life circumstances becomes difficult and, in some cases, leads to homelessness—which Douglas added could happen to anyone.

"It could happen to me and honestly, it's nothing to really be ashamed of either. Everyone has falters, everyone sometimes falls down, and we're here to help pick them up," Douglas stated. "That's really what The Rescue Mission does, we help pick people up off their feet. We give them a hand up, not handout."

Room for Improvement

National sites such as Shelter Listings and Homeless Shelters Directory have compiled fewer than 20 shelter sites in Fort Wayne, almost all of which are run by charitable organizations with set admission criteria. A 2021 City of Fort Wayne HOME-ARP Allocation Plan noted that "people working within the homeless system of care expressed a great concern that the shelters currently available in Fort Wayne are high barrier."

Barriers to entry at homeless shelters—including restrictions on those with addictions, mental illnesses and criminal records—can make it difficult to find and keep housing. In addition, faith-based shelters often have religious requirements. All but one of the shelters in Fort Wayne have barriers to entry. The HOME-ARP Allocation Plan found that "the City of Fort Wayne community needs shelters and services that... accept people without conditions of participation."

Many area shelters solely serve single men or women, with few focusing on youth who are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Interfaith Homeless Network Just Neighbors is the only Fort Wayne organization providing shelter and emergency housing for entire families without homes. As of October 2022, The Rescue Mission began providing emergency shelter and services for women, as the organization that had previously filled this gap closed.

Because of limited space and lack of accessibility at current shelters, a portion of the homeless population in Fort Wayne remains unsheltered. In one case, The Rescue Mission provided support to an individual who had been living in the woods for nearly 30 years. During an interview with WANE, Sally Segerson, founder of Street Reach for the Homeless, pointed out, "If someone is camped on private property, that certainly is trespassing. If someone is camped on public property that is loitering. So in this city there is no way to be legal and be homeless."

Breaking Down Stigmas

With these conditions, it becomes easier to see why 11.6% of Americans live below the poverty line, and why about 0.2% of the population are homeless. Living in America, a country that is currently experiencing its highest inflation rate in over four decades, is perpetually expensive. So why is there such a stigma around the topic of homelessness and poverty?

The simple answer, of course, is that the stigma began with prejudices that have existed towards non-wealthy individuals for an incredibly long time, as well as the fact that people are uncomfortable around the topic of people living without basic human rights in their own country. Depictions of poverty in the media are few and far between, and those that do exist usually treat these individuals as unhygienic, lazy jokes.

"The stigmas of homelessness are always going to be an issue we deal with," Douglas said. He encouraged that, to address and break down these stigmas, people recognize the humanity of those who are homeless with a simple greeting, which can be a rare occurrence for many experiencing a homeless crisis.

Of the changes needed to better aid Fort Wayne's homeless population, Douglas noted that "it can't be done by one organization... They say it takes a village, and that's the case." Most of all, he expressed a parting conviction in the kindness and humanity of people, during the Season of Giving and beyond: "We truly believe that if someone knows the story and knows what's happening here, their heart will incline them to give."

BACKGROUND GRAPHIC COURTESY OF FREEPIK
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE RESCUE MISSION, WANE 15 AND THE NEWS-SENTINEL

Buzz · Posted 1 hour ago

Did You Even *Have* A Childhood?!

13 Holiday Items That GUARANTEE Nostalgia

"You won't *believe* what you've forgotten!"

Graphics by Katelyn Styborski

written by
THOMAS HILL, KATELYN STYBORSKI, KAIYA CRONKHITE, & JULIA GAYER
designed by Thomas Hill

View 1225 comments

There's always a chance that childhood nostalgia might strike, but a walk down memory lane is guaranteed when the holiday season rolls around. Whether it's Disney+ suggesting a classic holiday episode, a family carrying out a yearly tradition of watching a Christmas movie or even friends buying each other toys as gag gifts, that nostalgic feeling will materialize to warm even the coldest of frost-nipped noses. These are some of the holiday movies, TV specials, snacks and even toys that we just can't forget!

TV Specials

Two of the most beloved Disney Channel original series are *Jessie* and *Good Luck Charlie*, so when they crossed over for a Christmas episode? Iconic. The episode, titled **"Good Luck Jessie: An NYC Christmas,"** originally aired in 2013 in two parts. The Christmas special follows Teddy and PJ Duncan as they travel to New York City, where Teddy is trapped on the subway with Zuri Ross and her nanny, Jessie Prescott. A few awkward moments later, Teddy and PJ end up staying the night with the Ross family, but everyone wakes up with temporary amnesia (and a stolen reindeer). Lilly Heine (11) said that while this amnesia scene was her favorite when she was younger, now she loves "when Zuri realizes that she doesn't need presents to have a fun Christmas."As always, chaos and comedy ensues, with just a touch of heartwarming Christmas joy. Of course, the vivid image of eight amnesiacs trying to return a stolen reindeer has never faded from the impressionable minds of the five-to-eight-year-olds who watched it, so almost every high schooler shares this part of Disney culture. Heine believes that this episode has such a sense of nostalgia because it was "really fun and were really relatable to our lives at the time." Furthermore, she says that shows like this "took up all of our childhood and now that they are over it kind of showed that we were ready to grow up a little bit," so rewatching them is a way to reclaim childhood.

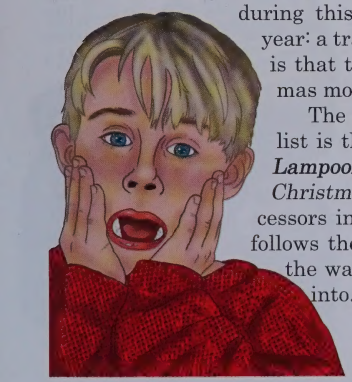
This isn't the only Disney Channel holiday special that holds an eternal place in people's hearts. The beloved show *Girl Meets World* leaned into the Christmas spirit of its '90s predecessor, *Boy Meets World*, with its season one holiday episode, **"Girl Meets Home for the Holidays."** The story focuses on the Matthews, who are hosting a family Christmas for the first time. The episode is full of cameos that warm the heart and bring back even more memories: Rider Strong

returns as Shawn Hunter, Betsy Randle as Amy Matthews and William Russ as Alan Matthews. Kennedy Ringen (10) even found the moment when "Shawn comes to the Mathews' apartment and surprises Cory" to be the most memorable part. The plot centers on Riley, who is trying to figure out why Shawn (her dad's best friend) doesn't like her, attempting to keep her best friend Maya away from her "cool uncle" Josh, and competing to prove that she and Riley are just as close as Cory and Shawn. Ringen believes this episode's sense of nostalgia comes from its message about "how important it is to spend time with family during the Christmas season."

Of course, there's no talking about Disney Channel holiday specials without discussing *Liv and Maddie*'s season one episode, **"Fa-la-la-A-Rooney."** This is Liv Rooney's first Christmas back in Wisconsin, and she is asked to perform at the town's Christmas tree lighting—alongside Jenny Keane, a ten-year-old girl who is a major brat. At the same time, her twin sister Maddie has to decorate the town's tree with her dad, and brothers Parker and Joey look for ways to make quick cash for Christmas gifts. The episode culminates at the lighting ceremony, where Jenny's show-stealing shenanigans cause a power outage during a very passive-aggressive performance. Of course, the day is saved when Maddie turns it into an elaborate part of her decoration.

Movies

From the stop-motion *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* to comedy-filled *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* all the way to *Die Hard* (depending on what you consider a Christmas film), there's tons of fun-filled films for everyone to enjoy. Of course, many have certain traditions during this most wonderful time of year: a tradition with some families is that they always watch Christmas movies.



The first film on this nostalgia list is the 1989 comedy, ***National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation.*** *Christmas Vacation*, like its predecessors in the *Vacation* film series, follows the Griswald family and all the wacky exploits that they get into. Clark Griswold tries to give his family the perfect Christmas but it doesn't go as planned. Clark has to deal with annoying in-laws, family quarrels and his cousin Eddie showing up completely unannounced. To make matters worse, Clark's boss doesn't give him the holiday bonus that he was depending on. It all comes together to create a fantastic time filled with iconic moments and plenty of laughs.

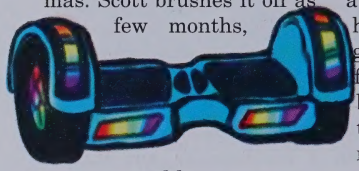
As to why it holds such a special place in the hearts of many is that it shows a much more realistic depiction of how the holidays go for many families. It's a nice time, but it isn't perfect. Things go wrong and spending time with family can cause some very awkward moments. People have begun to appreciate this film more and more because it's reminiscent of a simpler time. Clark Griswold has his own moment of nostalgia in the film where he finds old film reels with clips from his childhood Christmas and reflects on them. Ian Fraiser (11) said *Christmas Vacation* is "a great movie with a lot of laughs and relatability." Ian reflects on how fantastic this film was and continues to be.

The next film is the 1990 hit, ***Home Alone.*** The film follows Kevin McCallister, a troublesome kid with a rich family, after he yells at his family the day before they leave for Paris for the holidays. He's forced to sleep in the attic, but when the family is forced to leave in a hurry so as to not miss their flight, they end up forgetting Kevin at home. For a short while, he's elated not to have to deal with his family. However, it all turns sour when he discovers that two criminals plan to rob his house and it's up to him to defend the family home.

People's love for *Home Alone* is heavily influenced by nostalgia for their childhood. People think about staying up late during Christmas and watching dozens of movies with their parents. *Home Alone* is a good example. All the while, kids relate to Kevin, to a degree. Being a kid isn't fully fun, and it feels like you can never do anything. They feel like everyone looks down on them for their age and can't wait to grow up. On the other hand, people are also suckers for comedies, so this film obviously provided on that front. *Home Alone* also included one actor who defined many people's childhoods more than anyone else: John Candy. He didn't have a major role, but his presence in any film was always comforting, and he was just as

nice on-screen as he was off-screen. Unfortunately, *Home Alone* would go on to be one of the last films he starred in due to his death just four years later. *Home Alone* holds a special place in most people's hearts. One of whom was Anthony Gillespie (12) who stated that "*Home Alone* was a unique film for its time." Although *Home Alone* is a comedic film for kids, it's a fun time and quite sentimental.

Finally, the last film is Disney's 1994 classic, ***The Santa Clause.*** Divorced father Scott is spending Christmas Eve with his son, much to his ex-wife's chagrin, when Scott accidentally kills Santa Claus. Scott and his son get sent to the North Pole where an elf explains that Scott will have to become the next Santa before the next Christmas. Scott brushes it off as a dream, but over the next few months, he mysteriously begins to gain weight and grow a familiar looking white beard. Soon, it's all up to him to make sure this next Christmas goes smoothly.



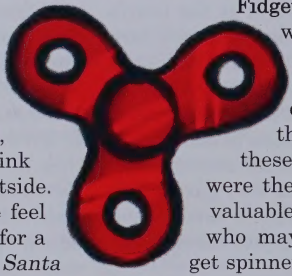
This film is equally important to many people. Plus, it's still pretty funny to see Tim Allen transform into Santa. When people think of this film, they think of the time spent with their relatives during Christmas when they were a kid, setting up beautiful decorations, and they think of eating cookies while the snow slowly falls outside. It's definitely a comfort film that makes people feel like everything is fine in the world, even if just for a moment. Abegail Donaldson (10) said that *The Santa Clause* was "a mix of fun and serious." It's beautiful that all these films, even the wacky ones, can have an impact on people and make them remember some of their favorite memories.

Toys

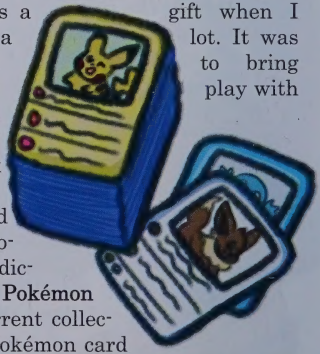
It's that time of the year when kids begin looking through holiday catalogs and friends discuss what gifts they're hoping to receive based on the popular trends through the year. There were always classics such as Legos, Barbies and a variety of stuffed animals which were popular with younger kids no matter what, but growing up in the mid-2000s to 2010s there were many specific gifts that signified the perfect gift-giving staples for years on end.

An item that may have taken some families a lot of convincing to commit to were **hoverboards**: almost every kid wanted one but viral videos of crashes and destruction made some parents wary of their safety. But in the elementary school hierarchy, if you had a hoverboard, you were immediately deemed cool. Kaylee Yates (11) said that "My favorite memory with my hoverboard is probably the times my brother or my friends and I would play tag using it. The tagger would be able to ride the hoverboard while chasing people which made them scary fast and led to some really funny wipeouts or intense chases. The hoverboard we had could go pretty fast which made the tagger much faster and scarier but overall made the game more fun."

Another wheeled menace haunting many people's childhoods were **Zhu Zhu Pets**. These fur-coated hamsters on wheels were the culprit of many impromptu haircuts due to the spinning wheels and tendency to put them near long hair. Still, everyone always seemed to want one. These furry friends had houses, cars and even classic hamster balls to roam around in, but nothing could stifle their cries of "GO GO GO!" as they wheeled away at impressive speeds.

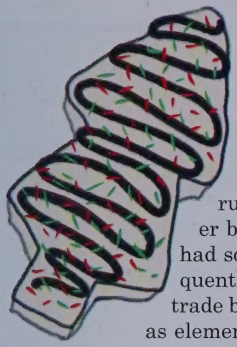


Fidget spinners were not just a toy, they were an era. Of all the trends of the 2010s, these may have been the most problematic within schools and were quickly banned as a result. However, this did not stop the love and support these simple gadgets brought in. Not only were they entertaining, they also had a more valuable and significant contribution to people who may benefit from stimulating toys. Fidget spinners come in almost any pattern or color imaginable. They also varied in shapes as there was the classic three washer weights style, Batman batarangs, Ninja stars, and so many more. "My friend gave me a yellow fidget spinner as a gift when I was a kid, and I loved it a lot. It was a classic one, and I used to bring it to school every day and play with it with all of my friends during class and at lunch." reminisced Ella Emrick (11).



In life, we are warned about addiction, but nobody warned us about addictions to hunting that one **Pokémon card** missing from the current collection. A large majority of Pokémon card owners as kids would collect binders full of their best

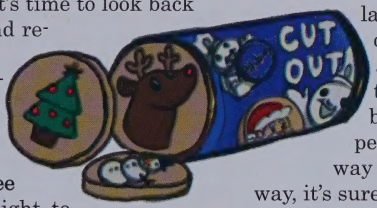
Graphics by Katelyn Styborski



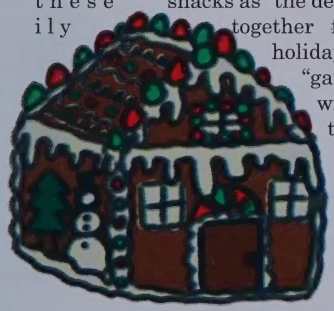
cards to show off, but in reality, about 85% of us had no clue how to even play the actual card game. Of course there would be made up playground versions of the game, but to this day who knows the rules of the official version? As another banned treasure, this one may have had some justification as card trades frequently went haywire and screams of "no trade backs" echoed across the playground as elementary schoolers realized the gravity of losing their treasured cards. One student, London Harris (10), solemnly recalled about how when she was in 5th grade, she "would bring them to school and one day I had them on the bus and someone stole my favorite shiny Pikachu but I didn't know who did it so I started crying and I never rode the bus again."

Snacks

When it comes to nostalgia, two of the most impactful senses are taste and smell. Just a whiff of a certain food or perfume can take us back to a childhood memory. Those moments can be so sweet and comforting, and what's more sweet than holiday treats? It's time to look back on traditional holiday desserts and revisit some old favorites.



Starting out with the classics, what's more nostalgic than walking through the grocery store and passing by the **Little Debbie's Christmas Tree Cakes**? It was not an unusual sight to see children begging their parents to buy that sweet spongy goodness. Whether they agreed to spend the extra $5 or not, we can all remember the taste of the sugary frosting and the slightly stale yellow cake. No classroom party was complete without the sound of tiny fingers unwrapping the plastic packaged pastries. Lydia Thilmont (12) claims that she has many boxes of these Debbie's cakes at her house this very moment. Thilmont describes these snacks as "the dessert that brings [her] family together for the holidays." Every holiday season, she remembers "gathering around the table" with her family and enjoying the tree-shaped desserts. Whether you agree or disagree, the Little Debbie's trees provided children with many sweet memories. This holiday, don't forget to munch on some store bought cake this season.



Moving on to something more hands-on, let's look at the Pillsbury Dough Boy's attempt at capitalizing on the holidays! If you ever helped your grandma bake last-minute Christmas cookies, you know about the **pre-cut Pillsbury sugar cookies**. From Christmas trees to flying reindeer, Pillsbury provided a variety of designs to burn in the oven. During stressful holiday baking escapades with my grandmother, I'd lay out slabs of cookie dough on a sheet of wax paper and smile at the little decorations on each cookie. To me, the taste left something to be desired, but there's no doubt about the fun it brought us as children. These low-maintenance cookies brought us so much holiday cheer, (and horror as we watched a snowman's face melt in the oven.) These cookies are sure to make an appearance during your holiday celebrations, so enjoy the happy memories that come along with them!

Last on the list is **gingerbread houses**. Surely everyone has attempted to make a gingerbread house out of those store-bought kits. Full of drippy frosting and stale cookies, these kits had much more creative appeal than they did taste. Carefully constructing a gingerbread house and letting it sit on your counter, while hoping it would last until Christmas brought joy unlike any other. The pride felt after completing the sugar-filled engineering product could outshine the star on top of your Christmas tree. Don't be shy, grab a kit and get to building! It's the perfect family bonding exercise, or a perfect way to celebrate the holidays with friends. Either way, it's sure to bring lots of laughs.

Christmas and other holiday confections are the perfect way to dive into those tasty childhood memories. This is the time of year when we get to indulge in our pleasures and take a much-needed vacation from the stress of the year. Make sure to enjoy your holiday celebrations! And don't be afraid to try or (re-try) these holiday sweets. They're a merry bunch.

Wrapping It Up

No matter which holiday items ring a bell, there's no doubt that some of the most nostalgic times in life are those around the winter holidays. Take a moment to reminisce by flipping through a kids' Christmas catalog, flipping the TV to Disney Channel, splurging on some holiday snacks or snuggling up and popping a holiday DVD (or even a VHS! Who remembers those days?). There's no better time to reflect on the warm fuzzy memories that will stick with us forever!

Gifts that Ke

written by
MELODY THRASHER AND AZALEA ORSINI
designed by Azalea Orsini

The holidays are around the corner, and good gifts are in high demand. Luckily for those who appreciate a charitable purchase, there are numerous places in Fort Wayne that make generous donations to those in need. GoodMRKT, Creative Women of the World and DeBrands are three local stores in Fort Wayne that give part of their profits to a greater cause. If you're looking for a place to buy your holiday gifts while simultaneously giving back to the community, these are some places you should consider.

GoodMRKT's mission is to do good for the community through the sale of their products. This company focuses on selling high-quality and well-made products, including accessories, home decor, clothing and more while fulfilling their purpose of giving back. According to the store's founder, Harry Cunningham, their target audience is intentionally "inclusive as possible" because their goal is to have "everybody to feel welcome," regardless of age, gender or budget. The profits from every item sold go toward a specific cause, which is displayed on the product's tag. Some well-known brands that are sold here include both Pura Vida and MudLOVE; one of their most popular items is a Sackcloth & Ashes blanket, which donates a blanket to a homeless shelter for every one bought.

In a recent interview with Cunningham, he was able to give more insight as to how to store operates and the origins of the company. Because Cunningham had retail experience prior to this, he was able to successfully start up this new company in the process of about half a year: fall of 2020 to spring of 2021. Cunningham claimed that what he was most proud of "bringing together so many purpose driven brands into one place." The store originally was owned by and developed through Vera Bradley, but is now privately owned after Cunningham bought the store.

Although goodMRKT only started in April 2021, they have made plenty of beneficial contributions to the world: 1,000 blankets donated to homeless shelters, 2,400 weeks of clean water, 2,000 meals donated to children, 700 tons of waste removed from landfills, 300 trees planted and 300 pounds of plastic recycled. Cunningham states that their donations go towards a number of different, broad reaching, causes such as "homelessness, getting people out of trafficking...people getting employment that are coming out of incarceration and the environment."

In a podcast interview, Cunningham explained that he was inspired by his Grandfather, who had his own local chain of dry goods stores back in the '40s. Cunningham went on to say that he thinks he "got a little bit of that gene... of bringing communities together." Ultimately, what drove Cunningham to execute this business truly was the sense of a greater purpose. He stated that what it really came down to was "in its rawest form... soul."

Creative Women of the World (CWOW) is another store that is built around giving back to the community and the people. Their

ep on Giving

pany is ultimately to help women and their communities overcome poverty, human trafficking and disaster. They do this by helping women from all over the world with entrepreneurial resources. Given the invitation from local women of towns and villages from countries all around the world, CWOW visits them and offers specific training skills in order to help them grow their businesses. CWOW sells goods such as jewelry, home decor, beauty products, and even clothing. According to the Board President of the company, Erika Mann, they "not only respond to the need for outreach but also empower women to recognize their own strengths, creativity, and talent... to use it to help themselves and their communities."

Lorelai Verlee started this company after being invited help to an artisan startup in Haiti called HAPI (Haitian Artisans for Peace International). After other artisans around the world began reaching out to help with distributing their handcrafted items, Verlee decided to expand the amount of help that was being given to those who needed assistance in growing their business. According to CWOW's website, "most women were very talented in handcrafting but had limited access to business training and broader distribution beyond their meager markets. They wanted to learn how to sustainably support their families."

Now supporting businesses in 50+ countries around the world, CWOW has successfully helped numerous communities. Countries from North America, South America, Africa, Europe and Asia have been deeply impacted by the work done through this company, and will be continued to be impacted in the years to come. Buying from this company not only improves the communities of those who are in need, but the individual lives that live within these communities.

If you're looking for a sweeter gift, look no further than DeBrands Gormet Chocolate. A local company, DeBrands has 2 Fort Wayne locations and an Indianapolis location. Cathy Brand-Beere started this company out of her passion for both chocolate and artistic creation. She feels as if she never had to work in her life because her job is her favorite hobby. She is specifically grateful for how DeBrands has "touched peoples' lives through special moments and celebrations."

The charitable requests section of Debrand's website says that they "are tremendously appreciative of the support we've had in our community. We have therefore made a point of giving generously to many worthy causes. Every day we receive numerous charitable requests and while it would be impossible for us to fulfill all the requests we receive, we are happy to play an active role in supporting our community."

A few causes they've donated to include Francine's Friends, a Fort Wayne organization offering mammograms to women in the community, Stop Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN), as well as Unity Performing Arts. Even without the added bonus of supporting the community of Fort Wayne, DeBrands' chocolate is high quality, meticulously crafted, and beautifully presented. If you're planning on gifting a loved one any of their products, rest assured that they'll be happy.

Fort Wayne is the second largest city in Indiana, yet it feels much more tightly knit than some give it credit for. These companies commit themselves every day to giving back a community that has given so much to them and their employees. While not everyone can afford to shop from local, charitable companies, if these gifts are within your budget, they're amazing and high-quality choices to consider.

Barbie

A Battle of Lawsuits and Femininity

Intro

Almost any girl knows the complete and all-consuming joy that comes with being five and opening a pristinley-wrapped gift and finding a fashion doll inside. For some, that was a Bratz doll—gaudy with glitz and glamour. However, for most, it was a Barbie doll—packaged in pink, and dressed head-to-toe in feminine flamboyance.

Why—you may ask—is there such a distinction between those who had playtime with big-eyed Bratz, and those who traveled through occupations with Barbie? Well, it all comes down to the complaints of the "big guys": early 2000s parents. The main complaint was of the oversexualization of Bratz, with their tiny waists and skimpy clothing; however, with further digging, should this compliant extend to Barbie as well? Are Bratz and Barbies truly as different as the seem?

Barbie

As Ruth Handler watched her young children play pretend, she noticed a startling difference between the two genders. While her son could play with astronauts and firemen, her daughter was limited to the nurturing role of a mother with traditional baby dolls. From this relatively common experience, the toy of the century was born: Barbie.

Barbra Millicent Roberts, referred to lovingly as "Barbie," was created out of Handler's desire to give young girls more valuable role models during play-time. The entire mission of the doll was to empower young women to strive for their dreams, even if they happened to be in male-dominated fields.

Currently, Barbie has had over 200 careers. In 1965, she became an astronaut in response to the space craze four years before man even landed on the moon. In the '70s, she became a surgeon in response to the low numbers of women applying to medical school, and in the '80s, she became a CEO. In the '90s, she took America by storm, as she ran for president before any woman had ever been on the ballot. And, possibly most relevantly to this generation, in the 2000s, Barbie became a computer engineer, video game geveloper, Mars explorer and robotics engineer. Today, only 24% of today's STEM careers are being held by women.

Despite all of these current developments, we need to look at the facts. Originally, Barbie was, to put it plainly, a simple fashion doll. Clad in a striped bathing suit, with pouty red lips, a sassy blonde ponytail and an absurdly-defined waist, many parents have criticized her as unrealistic and oversexualized. In fact, it was not until she was deemed a "sex symbol" in 1963 that Mattel gave her a best friend, Midge, attempting to bring back her innocence. Midge successfully reduced the number of complaining parents, and since then, many parents have let their children play with Barbies in place of other "oversexualized" dolls on the market.

Despite this intent, parents' previous complaints of oversexualisation contain some truth. Barbie was originally modeled after a sister-doll that was created in Germany in 1955. Named "Bild Lilli," it was a fashion doll that was modeled after risqué comics published in the Bild newspaper. Some believe it was created as a gag gift for men; however, there is some debate as to whether it was simply a slightly grotesque oversexualised playtoy that caught the attention of small children.

After Bild Lilli was created, Handler, who owned Mattel with her husband, purchased the rights to Lilli and then modeled the U.S.'s own Barbie's figure after her. Thus, in reality, Barbie is just as, if not more inherently sexualized than other fashion dolls on the market.

There is quite a bit of irony in this point, as Barbie's entire message was to empower girls, and yet, they were modeled after a doll that quite literally objectified women. Handler wanted little girls to have the tools to imagine their futures, and yet, gave them a doll with unrealistic proportions that indisputably have had some negative effects on society. Barbie became the epitome of what a beautiful woman should look like, what little girls would begin to want to look like, and yet, her figure is simply unobtainable.

Despite these criticisms and facts, Handler did succeed in some aspects. In 2020 Barbie Media published a study in companionship with Dr. Michele Borba, a leading empathy expert, writer and educational psychologist, and found that playing with Barbie dolls increases children's abilities to develop empathy and social skills. However, it is important to note, that although the company makes this claim, when looking into the study further, this concept can be applied to any doll that allows children to envision real-life situations.

BRATZ

written by
STELLA GRABLE & GAIA SPLENDORE
designed by
Gaia Splendore

Bratz

"The Girls with a Passion for Fashion!" When Bratz first hit the scene, their influence was monumental. In just five years of being on the shelves, they sold 125 million products. Strutting onto the modern toy market with impossibly big lips and somehow even bigger eyes, Bratz was built on a specific aesthetic.

Made to seem more urban and fashionable, the dolls sport glossy, pouty lips, shimmery eyeshadow and modern outfits. With wide leg jeans, crop tops and platforms, the girls looked like they came directly out of fashion magazines. While Barbie is known for her different careers, Bratz don't work—they shop. However, what they lack in ambition they make up for in diversity.

The four main Bratz dolls that make up the original entourage are Jade (half-white, half-Asian), Yasmine (half-Jewish, half-Latina), Sasha (African-American) and Chloe (white). Bratz's creator, Carter Bryant, understood the importance of representation in children's toys. Bratz didn't have to fly to the moon and back or become veterinarians, they could just have fun while happening to be women of color.

A study done by Rachel Karniol, Tamara Stuemler-Cohen and Yael Lahav-Gur looked into children's preferences when it comes to Bratz versus Barbies. They discovered that young children who did not adhere to standard gender norms preferred the appearance and clothing of Bratz. This represents the more inclusive nature of Bratz.

Their diverse cast and fashion that mirrored real early 2000s pop culture trends struck a chord with young girls across the world. Just four years after their release, Micro-Games America Entertainment (MGA Entertainment) sold over two billion dollars' worth of merchandise in 2005. They did not stop at just dolls, creating Bratz movies, shows and games.

Bratz were made as the antithesis of Barbie, whose blonde hair, blue eyes and light skin was antiquated in comparison to Bratz's varied features.

Also, Barbie has a history with being tone-deaf, like the infamous Oreo Barbie which came in a dark-skin Black Barbie or white Barbie, disregarding the insensitive label of "oreo" to describe a Black person.

However, it's impossible to talk about Bratz without mentioning the backlash MGA Entertainment received towards the dolls. From their extreme proportions, like huge lips and tiny waists, to their more urban, revealing fashion choices, many parents disapproved of the dolls. Many adults stated that what should be a children's toy is too sexualized.

"They wore makeup and dressed immodestly and my mom was worried that it would rub off on me," said Aliyah Hall (12). Many kids faced what Hall did—a household ban on Bratz. Concerned parents did not want their children to dress and act bratty. Highly criticized for their scandalous designs, Bratz remained unrelenting in their confidence. Skimpy or not, they showed young girls that they could be represented, trendy and stylish.

Conclusion

The Bratz v. Barbie fight has been going on for a long time, starting the moment Bratz were created. In fact, Mattel and MGA took their issues to court multiple times. Mattel started by claiming that they deserved the rights to Bratz because the creator of them, Carter Bryant, came up with the concept of the dolls while working at Mattel. Not only did Bryant deny these claims, saying that he conceptualized the dolls outside of Mattel, but MGA countersued and accused Barbie of corporate espionage, using spies and fake business cards to get ahold of Bratz's lucrative secrets.

The court ruled in favor of Barbie, giving Mattel the intellectual property of Bratz and 100 million dollars. However their victory did not last long, as two years later an appeals court threw out the original ruling and gave MGA the full rights to Bratz as well as over 300 million dollars.

The Mattel and MGA Entertainment lawsuits were brutal and definitely expensive. It is estimated that the lawsuits cost the companies around one billion dollars combined, resulting in both companies losing a lot more than they gained. In the end, Mattel had Barbie and Bratz returned to MGA.

It's hard to compare the dolls when they, in essence, are so different. Different children want different dolls, but both Barbie and Bratz are evolving with time. Aside from both sides losing some, it seems that Barbie remains consistently on top. Bratz were discontinued for a period of time, and although they were brought back, they are not nearly as prosperous as they once were. Barbie on the other hand is blooming. Working on her diversity, Mattel now offers both more skin tones and body shapes.

However, both sides are accused of oversexualization and projecting an unhealthy view of femininity on children. So, in the end, did anyone truly win?

NESSIE: SHAM OR SHOAL?

LOCH NESS MONSTER SIGHTINGS

written and designed by
KAITLYN FRY

The Loch Ness Monster also known as "Nessie" has been reportedly sighted as early as 565 A.D. Nessie is an aquatic creature said to be found in Loch Ness in Scotland. Stone carvings were found depicting a monster with fins. Over later centuries, few sightings were reported. Sightings of the monster seem to be inspired by Scottish folklore, which contained mythical sea creatures.

Trevyn Lewis (10) believes that the Loch Ness Monster is real. However, Lewis believes that it could be anywhere in any body of water, not just limited to Loch Ness. He believes that the monster is real because scientists have only explored 5% of the ocean in the world. Ace Daniels (10) does not believe the Loch Ness Monster is real. Daniels also believes that the pictures are fake.

In 1933, the legend began to grow; on May 2, 1933, a sighting from a couple in Highland, Scotland made it onto local news. The couple claimed to have seen "an enormous animal rolling and plunging on the surface." Following the article, a circus offered a 20,000 pound (23,923.30 dollars) reward for capturing the creature. The interest in the monster continued to grow especially after a different couple claimed to have seen the creature on land. In April 1933, one couple claimed to have seen a humongous creature they described as the Loch Ness Monster after it crossed the car's path disappeared into the water.

In 1934, Robert Kenneth Wilson took a photo of the creature, which had a small head and long neck. Many people speculated that the creature was a "Plesiosaur," a marine animal that became extinct 65.5 million years ago. In 1994, it was revealed that Wilson's picture was a hoax, the "monster" was actually a plastic and wooden head attached to a toy submarine.

In the 1960s, multiple British universities launched sonar expeditions to the lake. Nothing confirmed that there was a monster underwater; however, the sonar did detect large moving objects. In 1975, another quest combined sonar and underwater photography after enhancing a photo resulted in what resemble a giant flipper of an aquatic creature.

In 2018, researchers conducted a DNA survey of Loch Ness to determine what organisms live in the waters; while there were no signs of a Plesiosaur or other large animals, there was a large presence of eels in the lake. These findings left open the possibility that the monster could be an oversized eel. Despite the evidence against the monster being real, it remained popular and profitable.

Another theory for the sightings was that in the early 1930s, elephants may have been able to swim in the lake when the carnivals ended to give the animals a rest. Another theory is that there are large broken branches causing the monster sightings.

After the Loch Ness monster became familiar to people. Filmmakers started to make movies with the monster included; these films include, "The Water Horse," "Incident at Loch Ness," "Loch Ness Monster: New Evidence," "Nessie & Me" and many more.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

FINAL EXAMS

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT

Every year, during the last week before Christmas break, high school and college students all over the world take final exams. These tests have the potential to make or break a student's grade, as they are worth 15-20% of the semester grade. This part of the semester is often the most stressful.

THE ORIGIN OF EXAMS

The concept of exams has been around for centuries. The Civil Service Exam, a test to determine whether or not someone was qualified to serve within the Chinese bureaucracy, dates back to the sixth century. Following China, England later adopted an examination system to test potential governmental bureaucrats in the 1800s.

STUDYING AND STRESS

This same idea of cumulative exams has been applied to schools in order to test how familiar students are with the material they have learned.

Due to the large amounts of material that students must study in order to score well on final exams, stress is often a given during finals week. "Most students have six or seven finals to study for that have a major impact on their grades, the holidays are in full swing, and everyone's just worn out by the end of the semester," shared Britton Shumard (11).

When it comes to studying for final exams, students must review large amounts of material that they have learned over the course of the semester. Depending on the success that a student has had in a particular subject, studying could involve more memorization than application. Junior Ella Emrick said, "If you put in effort throughout the semester, then you're simply applying what you learned for the final...But, if you do not put in much effort throughout the semester, then the only way to succeed is to memorize and cram."

Though studying for finals is certainly a daunting task, there are methods to help you get the most out of your time. Prioritizing the amount of time you study for different subjects is key to success.

It is also recommended that you begin studying for exams as early as possible, reviewing a little each day. Study the material consecutively in the order that you learned it, and spend the last couple of days before the exam studying all of the material.

When preparing for something other than the traditional exam-style final, such as a portfolio, project, or speech, it is important to begin working as early as possible to give yourself a sufficient amount of time.

EXEMPTIONS

One alternative to mandatory final exams for all that schools across the country have adopted is exempting students with a certain grade from taking the final exam. Most of the schools that have implemented this system require students to have a grade of 96% or higher to be exempt from taking the exam for that class. Additionally, many require a certain attendance and disciple record to be eligible.

Junior Vienna Ensign viewed this idea positively, stating that "it would make students more motivated to keep up their grades during the semester." The idea behind exempting students from exams is to incentivize hard work by rewarding students who have kept good grades during the semester, and it could have positive effects on the academic performance of students.

THE UPSIDE

Could there possibly be any benefit to something as universally disliked as final exams? Emrick said, "finals are almost like a final redemption opportunity." Finals give students who are unhappy with their grade one last chance at improvement. "I think that one benefit to finals is that we refresh our memory on things that we learned throughout the semester," shared Megan Jehle (11). Another benefit to final exams is that they offer students a taste of what college students face. Biomedical science teacher, Tammy Behrens, said that taking finals "prepares students for college exams which cover material from a longer time period."

Final exams are usually not a pleasant experience for students; however, it looks as though they are here to stay for the time being. So, try to do your best.

FINALS SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Dec. 21:
P1(class) 7:45-8:38
P2 (EXAM) 8:44-10:14
P3 (class/lunch) 10:20-12:01
P5 (EXAM) 12:07-1:37
P6 (class) 1:43-2:35

Wednesday, Dec. 22:
P1(EXAM) 7:45-9:15
P3 (EXAM) 9:21-10:51
P4 (class/lunch) 10:57-12:38
P6 (EXAM) 12:44-2:14
P7 (class) 2:20-2:35

Thursday, Dec. 23:
P4 (EXAM) 7:45-9:15
P7 (EXAM) 9:21-10:51
Dismissal: 10:51 AM

Agent Domino
Issue Three

Designed by CLAIRE HOUSER
Written by GRACE HENSLEY

Inside the Submarine
Did you get it?
Another successful mission.
Pshh, Quentin said I wouldn't get past security.
Was there any doubt?
For a doctor, he isn't very smart!
At the Base...
I trust you didn't have much trouble?
Nothing I couldn't handle.
Agent Domino. You never fail to impress.
Good. Take this to Quentin for analysis.
Sir.

Chill out and read more at hhsspartana.com!

the Spartana

Issue 6 February 2023

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designed by MADELINE PHUONG
COVER PHOTO
courtesy of AZALEA ORSINI
via MIDJOURNEY
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designed by GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

PHOTO COURTESY OF DIGNITY MEMORIAL

Remembering Mr. Steverson

"If you didn't have time to do it right the first time, you won't have time to do it right later."

Robert Steverson, who taught Integrated Chemistry, Physics and Earth Science at Homestead and mentored the Olympus Robotics team from its inception in 2014 until his retirement in December 2022, passed away on Thursday, January 12 at the age of 59. He was a veteran, who served in the United States Navy for 20 years, as a Senior Chief. Mr. Steverson had retired due to health concerns, citing the fact that his students needed consistency and not a teacher that was constantly on medical leave. Mr. Steverson was well-loved by his coworkers and students, as well as the robotics team that he coached, and will be widely missed.

LEDITOR

or, letter from the editors

Dear Reader,

As we settle into the second month of a new semester and Fort Wayne enters the second, less fun half of the winter season with single-digit temperatures and miserably cloudy skies, we at the Spartana know the importance of staying entertained and informed. So whether you find yourself at home curled into a patterned blanket or shivering through your coat in the Homestead parking lot, crack open the Spartana and feel the heat generated by flipping through these pages.

For the barren month of February, we bring you a plethora of articles surrounding the latest in technology. From technological advancements like Neuralink to ChatGPT, and developments that directly affect our education like the implementation of Zoom into our eLearning days, we cover all your biggest questions on how these changes will affect our daily lives. Beyond technology, we present the latest in Homestead construction updates, a roundup of Homestead arts, a spotlight on the Robotics team and a tribute to a well-known name in the racing world.

If at any point you find yourself with an intense longing to be a part of this sacred publication, consider joining our evolving staff. As we expand, we are in need of writers willing to provide content for our website at hhsspartana.com. In the unfortunate situation that you are engrossed by the Spartana but are unable to join the class due to schedule unavailability, the Spartana is always on the prowl for guest writers. For any inquiry, whether question, comment, constructive criticism or praise, contact us at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com.

As always Spartans, good luck, and see you next month.

Happy Reading,
Ganga Subramanian & Madeline Phuong

PHOTO COURTESY OF WARPED FACTOR

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF BYTE MAGAZINE

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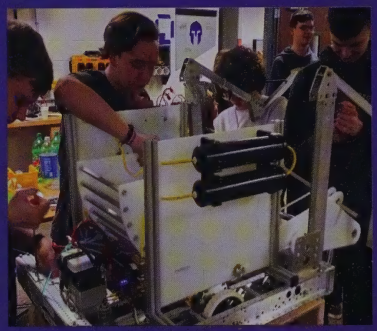
written and designed by
ELENA MORENO

Saturday, January 6, marked the beginning of the FIRST Robotics Challenge (FRC) of 2023. FIRST stands for 'For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology' and is a robotics community dedicated to promoting and inspiring kids in STEM. FIRST is globally renowned, even releasing a Disney+ documentary in 2022 called 'More Than Robots'. The team's assistant captain, August Noll (10) says that his favorite part of FIRST is that it's a "great environment of people to be around" and that it "inspires healthy competition" in students interested in STEM.

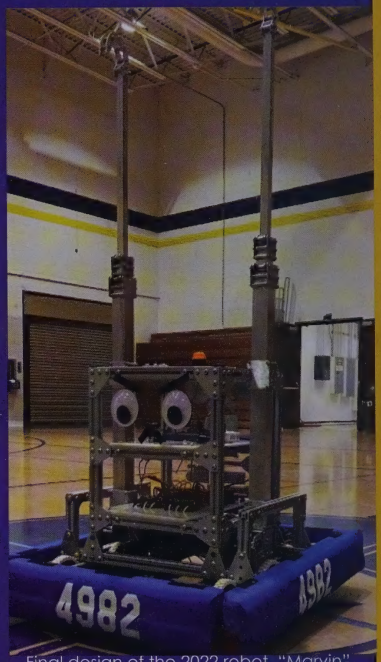
However, this community means just as much on a local scale as it does global. Homestead's own robotics team, Olympus Robotics, competes in the FRC competition. (insert quote). In 2022, the team went to the robotics state championships at the Rose Hullman Institute of Technology, making it to the semi-finals, ranking nineteenth in the state and was named Optimum Sports Team of the Week (a highlight not often given to non-physical sports teams). This year, they will attempt to make it to the world championship in Houstan, Texas.

Olympus Robotics is made up of several mentors and over twenty students. FIRST is a student led program, and there is something for everyone regardless of interests. Advertising, social media, engineering and computer programming are just a few of the things team members do. Miguel Guzman, the teams lead coder, describes his duties on the team as "[making] sure the robot can actually work" though he helps the engineering team as needed.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF OLYMPUS ROBOTICS MEDIA TEAM



Team members at work on the robot



Final design of the 2022 robot, "Marvin"

Team photo taken after winning the team's first regional competition

SACS Reintroduces Zoom for Unplanned E-Learning Days

On Wednesday, Feb. 2, students were met with the news that all of Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) would be moving back to Zoom for unplanned eLearning days. The new schedule for eLearning days will have students on Zoom from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., spending 20 minutes in each class. This change comes to ensure that SACS is in compliance with a 2022 Indiana law that limits schools to three unplanned virtual learning days, of which half the day must be synchronous.

SACS released its official plan for the new Zoom schedule on Friday, Feb. 3. Because the district has already used its three asynchronous days, any future unplanned cancellations due to weather will be remote learning days, with students on Zoom from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. They will spend 20 minutes in each class, with a six minute break in between.

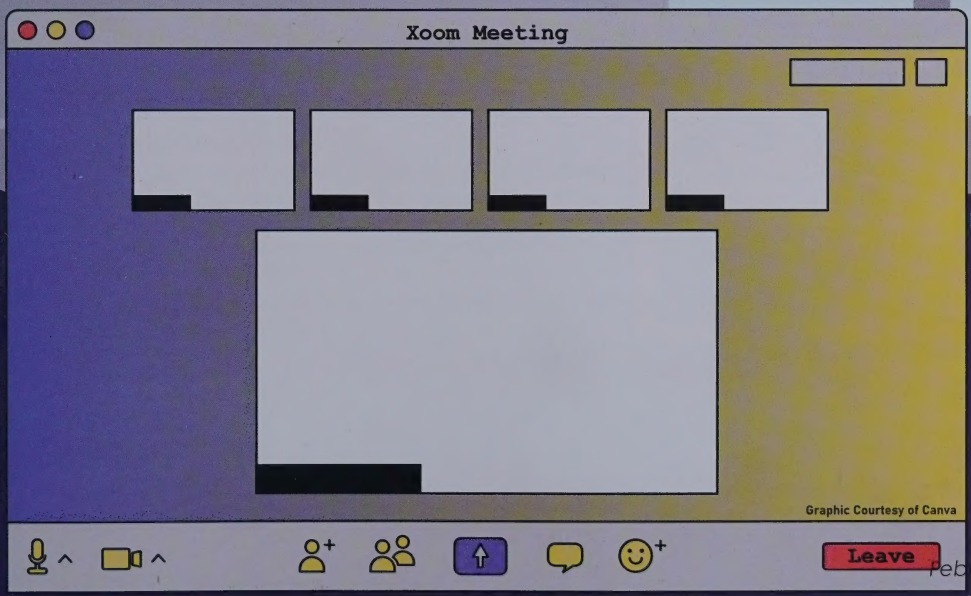
These guidelines do not apply to planned eLearning days such as Flex Days or SAT Day. Homestead Principal Susan Summers explained that "we have a waiver from the state that allows us to use eLearning as we have always done on planned days. These were all pre-approved by the state over the summer." SACS will continue to use the typical eLearning format on these days.

SACS is considered a high-performing district by the Indiana State Department of Education (IDOE), which gives the district some special privileges. "Because we are a high performing district, the state does allow us to do eLearning for planned days away from school. That is why we can have students complete assignments from home and then email and Canvas message their teachers for assistance in the afternoons on Flex Days and when we are giving the PSAT and SAT exams," Summers said. According to the IDOE website, a performance-qualified district must "receive an A for the previous school year."

Students have varied opinions on returning to Zoom. Nurul Tarma (12) said, "I love Zoom because I can be on my phone the whole class. Zoom is honestly so nice!" Tarma also enjoys that "while the teacher is talking, even though it's a bit of a distraction, it's nice to do what I want during class and not get yelled at." On the other hand, Rosemary Rogers (12) believes that "Zoom will be disorderly, and there won't be enough time to do anything. It would be far more productive if we just had the work time on our own." She points out that "many people are going to have jobs in the future where they have to work from home and be accountable for their own work, but the school is essentially saying that they don't trust us to do our own work and be accountable."

The two are also at odds on whether or not Zoom is beneficial for student-teacher engagement. Rogers claimed that " Zoom is not a replacement for the classroom. You're not getting the same amount of engagement with the teacher or other students." Tarma, however, takes the standpoint that "Zoom is similar to a classroom because I get to interact with the teachers and students even though we're at home."

It remains to be seen whether this change will be beneficial to students and teachers, but all students should be prepared to follow the new schedule in the event of any future unplanned cancellations.



Graphic Courtesy of Canva

written and designed b
THOMAS HILL

CONSTRUCTION AT HOMESTEAD: WHAT'S GOING ON?

written by
KAITLYN FRY

designed by
LUKE LAND

The building has changed a lot since the beginning of the year. The gym has been completed and walls have been put up. The Grand Hallway is starting to get some finishing details with the Spartan logo embedded in the floor. The gym has a Jumbotron and four sets of bleachers on the sides of the room. Close to the gym are the concessions; they are finished and hold the FCCLA Coffee Bar in the mornings. The weight room has also been finished and is in use.

Many classrooms in the 100s had to move to other areas in the building due to the construction disrupting class. Some windows have been removed because of the building process near them.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BARSTOOL HOMESTEAD

Picture of the new Spartan Arena right after completion.

A number of of classes moved from upstairs to the Freshman Academy. Homestead High School Principal Susan Summers said, "To make room for these classes, Room 900 and the Seminar Room were both divided." The rooms on the north end of the 200s hallway are supposed to be done by late spring. Biology classes will be moved into those rooms permanently.

The next rooms that are planned to open soon are the new dance studio and a mini theatre called "The Grey Box." Summers said, "A gray box theatre is a small, unobstructed performance space, with state-of-the-art sound and lighting systems, and flexible seating." The theatre will be a great place suited for small-audience performances.

Parts of the existing building will be transformed into a new library and computer help center. The current band and orchestra rooms will be turned into new office spaces. There will be a culinary arts area that will have two new domestic kitchens and an industrial kitchen. At some point in the future, there will be a new large cafeteria seating area so that all students can be fed in three lunch periods rather than four. There will also be four sets of stairs so that traveling is quick and easy. The new part of the building includes places in the hallways for students to collaborate and work together. Summers does not have an estimate on when the construction will be done because there is still so much to do.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BARSTOOL HOMESTEAD

Picture of the new weight room right after completion.

What Are You Really Learning?

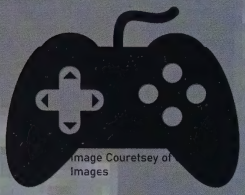


Image Couretsey of Google Images

written and designed by
KAIYA CRONKHITE & KATELYN STYBORSKI

Many children from the 2000s had access to the internet. By stealing a parent's phone, one could dive into a world of new-form entertainment: mobile games. Reminiscing on the earlier and simple days of Where's My Water? and Fireboy and WaterGirl can be so comforting and nostalgic. Many Gen Z kids grew up with these games, and they still have tender feelings for their childhood pastimes.

Nowadays, most games are "very gun affiliated and violent," said Elizabeth Cornelio (11). She claimed her favorite childhood game: Angry Birds, didn't negatively change her mind because of its simplicity. Exposure to vulgar or violent games during a child's impressionable years can cause many negative side effects on development. Angry Birds originally attracted audiences for its simplicity and easy gameplay. Articles such as "An Assessment of the Mobile Games Utilization and Its Effect to One's Computational Thinking Skills" (written by Jane M. Fernandez, Thelma D. Palaoag, and Josephine Dela Cruz), provide insight showing that mobile games which develop computational thinking skills help "students become problem solvers and innovators when students have the capacity to determine what to extract from a system or problem in order to create a solution." Angry Birds had added benefits such as being "a good problem-solving game because you have to try different methods to knock down all the pigs" (Cornelio).

It's lucky that most 2000s children were influenced by the simplistic games of Subway Surfers and Cut the Rope, for there were also a few games released in those years that were not appropriate for children.

The early 2000s introduced many first-person shooter games like Halo in 2001, and Call of Duty in 2003. These games were incredibly violent and centered around war. Both games received a Mature rating, meaning they were intended for people aged 17 and older. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry claims that children exposed to violent media at an early age "may become numb to violence, imitate the violence, and show more aggressive behavior" and that "younger children [...] may be more influenced by violent images." The casual mobile games kids grew up with had a relaxed nature and an environment that encouraged learning; this provided children with safe games to play during school and recreational hours.

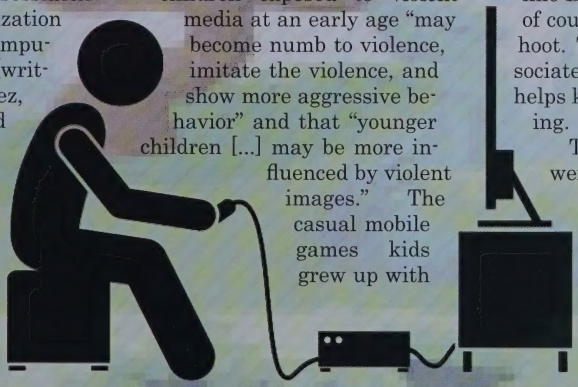


Image Couretsey of Google Images

Even children's games that don't aid in problem-solving can create a sense of community. Bethany Perkins (12) always returned to the game Duck Life 3. She would play it with her classmates in her younger years. Perkins claimed she felt "unity that comes from sharing and playing a game." Perkins extends this feeling to the entire site of CoolMathGames. According to Perkins, CoolMathGames was a "uniting experience for all of us, regardless of which school I was at or who I was with." Playing these games now "brings back those feelings of comfort and nostalgia" for Perkins. Furthermore, learning has recently been more "game-ified" with sites like Blooket, Gimlet, Quizizz, and of course, everyone's favorite: Kahoot. These allow children to associate education with fun, which helps kids feel excited about learning.

The simple games of the past were staples of Gen Z's development. Even today, they can remain a positive influence in developing kids' minds.

"Leafy Lodgings," awarded a Silver Key in the 2023 Northeast Indiana and Northwest Ohio Scholastic Art & Writing Awards
ARTWORK COURTESY OF ELISE DELANEY

written by
Morgan Conn, Myia Hamed, Saif Ibrahim, Gavin Leton, Cameron Maggart, Lauren Olry, Tallinn Yaruchyk, Zoey Zemmol

Drumcore

The Homestead Indoor Percussion, or Drumcore, is an extracurricular activity established three years ago. The team is divided into three main categories: Drumline, Cymbal Line and the Pit/Front Ensemble. Regardless of the short time this program has been around, it has already proven itself to be capable of competing at the state level. The group makes use of props and the musicians' abilities to fit the theme of the performance and to enhance the overall experience. While each form of music is slightly different, they all come together to form a cohesive band.

Unfortunately, the performances themselves can be difficult to carry out. According to Christopher Bay (12), they are "a great challenge physically and mentally." Passing out from overexertion and tripping on the tarp are some of the more common injuries sustained while performing. However, despite this, the mindset of the band assists in its success. According to Sydney Lumpeik (10), "it is an enjoyable experience to learn new instruments or further your existing skills" through the band practices. Dylan Connor (10) believes the overarching purpose of the group is to sound like a "professional and well-rounded" team while simultaneously hanging out with friends and having fun.

Creative Writing

Creative Writing Club is a place where students come together to share and receive feedback on their work. Typically, students will submit and sign up to read each other's work and also sometimes submit their work into online writing competitions. Creative writing meets every Thursday from 2:45 pm to 3:15 pm or 3:30 pm in room 932. The sponsor of Creative Writing is Ms. Olivero who stated, "I like to get to hear students' writings that are for fun in contrast to the writing that I assigned to them." Creative writing club's President Olivia Butler stated, "I love creative writing deeply because I love to write and I love people in the club." Kendyl Kraick, the Vice President, has been "using paper and pen...to get your emotions out and sharing it can prove to be very therapeutic." It was originally founded eight years ago in 2015, then called "Novel Writing."

Marching Band

Marching band is part of the Homestead band that focuses on performing while in step. The marching band typically plays music while also marching with other acts such as dancing also being performed. The marching band has several different sections made up of musicians, drum majors and the color guard. Mr. Karkosky, the assistant Director of Bands, stated that one of his favorite things about the marching band was "being outdoors in nice weather so that is a great reason to start." The concept of a marching band first started in the military as a way to efficiently move troops around. The Marching Band has several competitions such as ISSMA, BOA and others held by various schools. The Homestead Marching Band meets for the first nine weeks during seventh period, as well as Tuesday and Thursday evening practices and Wednesday and Friday after-school practices with occasional Saturday rehearsals.

designed by
Gaia Splendore

Book Club

Book club's student leaders are currently Alejandro Tinnell, Gaia Splendore, and Ren Moore. The current club sponsor is Mr. Beer, an English teacher here at Homestead High School. Mr. Beer explains that the club "celebrates books and reading.

Mr. Beer continued by stating that "the club engages in a variety of activities centered around reading, including sharing favorite books, reading short stories and longer works together, and also doing some creative writing." New members are always welcome at the meetings on Mondays in room 117 from 2:45 to 3:25.

Audio Aficionados

The HHS Audio Aficionados club meets every Wednesday after school in room 600B with Mr. Dunn. The club is where students can come and join every week to learn how to make music and the history behind it. In the class, students will listen to full albums of songs which has either cultural significance or have helped shape modern music. The students will talk and explain what they know about all kinds of music. Mr. Dunn says that during the class he talks about music with the students along with explaining some of the greatest music of all time. Outside of class, Mr. Dunn likes to talk to the students about what they listen to outside of the classroom.

Dance Team

The Homestead dance team was first initiated 25 years ago by Jennifer Bay, the current assistant principal for Homestead. Since its establishment, it has ascertained the title of National Champions numerous times, proving time and time again that it is one of the most competitive and fierce teams to grace the nation. However, with so much riding on the performance of the dancers, the team's coach, Britney Lombardo, has no easy task in selecting the students to be on the team. Coach Lombardo and her fellow coaches "take into consideration their grades, work ethic and character," along with other qualities that fit the team's dynamic.

To many people on the dance team, dance is a means to express themselves through movement and art. Aashi Jain (10) said, "I use dance as a resource to let out my emotions, and as a safe space." To those that choose to take dance to a competitive level, the dance team is split up into two teams, Varsity and Junior Varsity. Each team has captains that are voted into the position by their peers and coaches. During competitions, there are several categories the team competes in, such as pom, hip hop, jazz/lyrical and ensemble.

K-Pop Club

Whether it be watching K-Pop videos, dancing to K-Pop songs, or sharing presentations on K-Pop groups K-Pop club is a place for all who are interested in coming together and having some fun.

Jackson Kuchmay, the K-Pop club president, has a great time leading and allowing people a space to explore their interests in K-Pop. He states that the "main focus of the club is to provide a space where people can discuss and enjoy things related to K-pop." He puts together a lot of fun activities, and currently, during most meetings, they "listen to songs under certain themes and discuss what [they] enjoyed or did not enjoy about the song."

Trying to get into a new genre of music is difficult, but Kuchmay reassures that the K-Pop club is a great opportunity for all. He thinks that "anyone who is interested in K-pop could benefit from joining the club. It is an environment where people can discuss their favorite songs and hold constructive discussions."

If anyone is interested in joining the club and checking out all the musical fun, the club meets in room 924.

Pep Band

Homestead's Pep Band (around 150 members) plays pep songs and enthuses the crowds for the two varsity basketball teams. When asked how they prepare, Grant Bowen (Tuba) stated that "normally most of our rehearsing of the music we play at games happens in the band room before the games." Chase Goings (Cymbal) mentioned his hopes for playing at the football games and confirmed that the Pep Band does not compete. Marshall Jenson's (Saxophone) favorite part of the program is watching the basketball games and the ability to "hang out with your friends". Finally, Owen Purinton ("Performer") noted that there are no tryouts, meaning that any band member can join that is in the Spartan Alliance.

Wind Ensemble

Wind Ensemble is the premier concert band, composed of about 45 members of Homestead's best wind and percussion musicians. Aleena Freedman (3rd chair tuba) says that the Wind Ensemble meets "during 7th period each day during school, but we also have occasional after-school rehearsals." When asked if they compete, Greyson Chamoun (2nd alto sax) stated that "Yes! We compete at ISSMA (Indiana State School Music Association)". Christopher Bay (2nd part trumpet) communicated that there are indeed tryouts, which "happens around the end or middle of the marching band season when it comes to prep". Overall, Timothy Rowan's (Tenor Saxophone) favorite part of the program is "being able to perform exciting pieces with excellent musicians".

Orchestra

The Homestead HighSchool Orchestra is a class that anyone can take and enjoy! The class is available for anyone to take but current orchestra student Ola Tanimola (9) says "you need experience to take in highschool". Maggie Schmidt (9) points out that you have "to know how to play an instrument" in order to be successful. According to various members, being in the orchestra is more than just playing music. As Eli Trumbull (10) explains, it is an opportunity to gain experience. She says that it is about "making a connection between yourself and the class–the entire "environment is great!"

Tanimola explains a typical class involves "cooperation." The director of the orchestra is Mr. Warfield and the next performance is in March, when anyone is welcome to watch the talented orchestra perform.

Basket Weaving

The Homestead High School Basket Weaving Club is a club for anyone who wants to learn more about fiber arts. Gabrielle McCallister (12) explains that "they are always looking for people to join". Meghan Stauffer (11) says "everyone is welcome to make fun baskets" anytime but "there are dues of around $15 for supplies" McCallister explains. Katherine Panozzo (12) adds that "if you are thinking about joining you should come to the next meeting." She also comments that they "meet every other Wednesday in Ms. Lamont room", Stauffer comments, that the club meets until "3:30". McCallister describes the group's project as being varied during the first semester, including making "pumpkin baskets, which took a couple of weeks." Panozzo adds that "last year" they "made "felt figures."

Theatre

Theatre for years has been a pride and joy for multiple schools. Homestead included. A display of the arts in its whole entirety represented by a play or musical. Lindsey Moreau thought that,"People create this idea around (theatre) that theatre kids are annoying"

Delving into theatre, Lindsey Moreau(11), a member of our now-on-break musical. Lindsey does theatre because she enjoys "(Theatre)with friends, that's the best part." Homestead's musical is a bit lower profile, Lindsey said that the entire escapade lasts only about 2 months and happens only once a year.

A daily routine of a musical member consists of getting a script book, learning choreography, and memorizing songs. If you're ever interested in joining the musical, auditions start in the fall and the entire process lasts 8-9 weeks. Homestead's art programs have never been so proud of our theatre!

Show Choir

Show Choir is a competing choir with two groups, Class Royale and Elite. Class Royale is a mixed group and Elite is a unisex group; both groups compete at the same competitions every Saturday in February through April at different schools. Homestead will host a competition called Show Choir Showcase. Curtis Shaw is the director of both Elite and Class Royale and Andrew Sherman is the assistant director for both groups.

Ren Moore 12 observes "The most stressful thing I have faced in show choir is probably the competitions. They're so much fun, but since they're 14-hour days, they end up becoming a lot to handle."

Moore explains why it is worth it: "I just love show choir in general. I love to perform, to dance and sing, and to do both at the same time is so much fun. I love the high energy environment at comps and I love to watch other groups perform."

Raphael Souza 11 echoes, "I enjoy the feeling of being in it. I feel like I can be myself and for a few hours forget about everything else in the world. I feel free in a way."

Anna Ousley observed that "Parts of show choir that I struggle with is the long rehearsals and the competitions. During the competition season, which spans from January to March, the choir typically spends about 32 hours a week together rehearsing and competing. This can make it difficult to avoid group conflict and not getting annoyed with people."

Ousley explains why she likes to spend so much time in show choir: "I really enjoy all the friends that I've gotten from the program, and we are like a big family."

Color Guard

Color Guard is a group of performers who perform choreographed dances and routines with multiple equipment. They perform with the marching band at competitions so they need to learn to have self-confidence and develop leadership.

Makenna Davey 10 exclaims, "My favorite part of Color Guard is learning the show. The most stressful or challenging part of being in Color Guard is learning the work and then working to improve it."

Davey explains that during the fall season, competitions are usually held every week, located in local high schools, universities, or Lucas Oil in Indianapolis. Kate Becerra 9 adds that practice is usually three hours long, and that there are occasionally eight hour practices, with the varsity practicing more than the JV team.

Becerra comments that she enjoys "Getting to see my friends and having fun while also working hard. It is motivating to have multiple companions while practicing, since we are all energetic when together, even when tired," while it is challenging "getting over the fear of new tosses and tricks that we have to do. It can be really scary tossing a six foot metal pole when there is the fear of that it may hit you."

Cypher comments that her favorite part of Color Guard is, "The friendships that I have made. Everyone is so supportive of one another and very fun to be around. My friends in guard have made me feel like I can always be myself and I am so thankful for that. I have enjoyed every moment I have spent with everyone whether it was competition, practice, or guard breakfast."

ISSMA

The annual competition ISSMA (Indiana State School Music Association) is usually held in Indianapolis. Group and individual competitions are scheduled throughout the year, depending on the type of music and musical group.

Homestead's marching band goes to Indianapolis each year and competes there over the weekend. The marching band got 6th place in ISSMA last year.

Claire Houser (10) who has competed several times, asserts that "ISSMA's most well known event, as well as my personal favorite is the solo and ensemble contest, but they also host concerts and clinics." She explains that all competitors must sign up either to play a solo, or as a small group in front of a judge. They pick out a piece and start practicing usually multiple months prior to the event.

Alexandria Lee 10 who has competed multiple times has observed that "This organization's purpose is to evaluate musicians and give them a score. There is a wide range of things you can do in ISSMA but they are in front of a judge. You can either do a group like, Marching Band, Show Choir, Jazz, and ensemble. If you want to see your personal strength you can do a solo performance."

Winter Guard

Winter Guard is a competitive performing arts opportunity at Homestead. Each year has a show theme and performs to a soundtrack on a 60ft x 80ft tarp with costumes, props and flags that contribute to the show's theme/story. In the past, Homestead has made it to State every time they competed in an IHSCGA circuit, placing in the top three numerous times. To Sabrina Hostetler, one of the team coaches, "the peak enjoyment is performing in front of a gym full of fellow Color Guard members from around the state/country, friends, family, and the judging community."

The team is split up into Varsity and Junior Varsity, with each group housing different opportunities, such as solo or weap- online. At the beginning of the season, auditions are held to place members into their appropriate groups. Further divisions of each group would include the "lines," which encompass the Flag line, Rifle/Weapon line and Dance line. The most enjoyable part of Winter Guard for Cassidy Ickes (10) is the ability "to learn new skills and make friends," which contributes to the "welcoming and happy atmosphere" presented by the team.

Poetry Out Loud

Created in 2006 by the National Endowment of the Arts, the Poetry Out Loud Recitation Contest aims to strengthen students' public speaking, literary interpretation and self-confidence skills. Participants memorize three poems from the Poetry Out Loud anthology, with at least one poem being 25 lines or fewer and one poem from before the 20th century. English teacher Jason Beer sponsors Poetry Out Loud at the school level, providing support to students and organizing the Wednesday, Feb. 1 school recitation competition. English teachers Sally Rauber and Tara Olivero judged the contest.

Senior Gaia Splendore, who has participated in the program for two years, placed first with her poems, "Dawn of Man" by Max Ritvo and "Ode to the Electric Fish That Eat Only the Tails of Other Electric Fish" by Thomas Lux. "I love Poetry Out Loud because it allows for creative expression and performance," she said. "Poetry is the working man's art form." Splendore qualified to compete in the state competition held in Indianapolis, Ind. in March.

Film Club

Film Club was founded by the film literature teacher, Mrs. Smith, and meets on Tuesdays. She runs the club, which has a main goal of appreciating films that the members choose. The club tries to watch movies that make cultural and social impacts on life. One example is their viewing of Back to the Future, which made way for multiple fashion trends like pump-up high tops and bright neon colors that the character Marty McFly wears.

Smith gave some insight into what Film Club truly is about for her, "I just like spending time with students outside the classroom and sharing the experience together." She also related the club as a testament to perspective, because a film can be viewed as a simple narrative or something deeper, as an artistic piece filled with symbolism and deeper meaning. Art appreciation here at Homestead has fully been captivated by the film club and Mrs. Smith.

Jazz Band

Jazz is one of the most influential genres of music to ever exist, with roots in New Orleans and New York City. Jazz unites people–it is often seen as the mesh between traditional African music and European music. But how has jazz affected people here at Homestead?

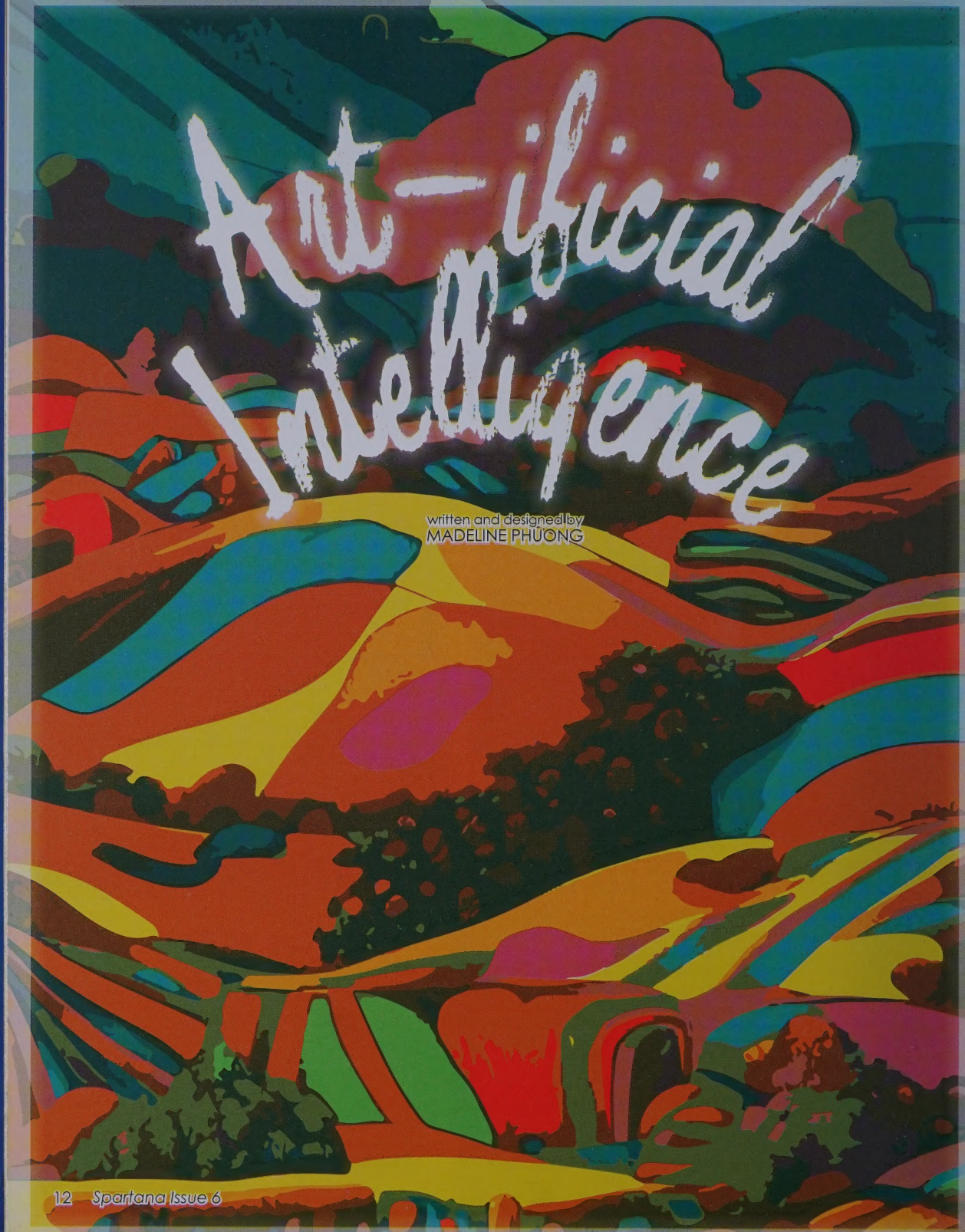
Gavin Sanders, one of Homestead's members in the Homestead Jazz Band, expounded on why he loves Jazz and enjoys playing it so much. Simply put, he said, "It is a very relaxing and diverse genre of music. It is very expressive and brings out some powerful emotions. Also, it is just very fun to play and do improvisation and solos." Jazz has been a more diverse way for students that love to play music to not only pursue their passion but leave some of the stresses of the Homestead Marching Band. Sanders later added that our Jazz band competes on the Jan. 21 at Purdue University. He explained that a consistent routine of practicing and learning pieces before competitions has led them to great performances headed by the band's directors, Jason Witzigreuter and Richard Karkosky.

Art Club

The HHS Art Club meets 2 times a month on Monday in room 108 with Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones said that people enjoy coming to the art club because they are able to connect with other students to show what they can do in art and show their talent. Also learning more skills with art and helping students to expand what they know about it. If you want to find out more information about Art Club, contact either Mrs. Jones or the student leaders Madeline Phuong, Elise Delaney and Katie Tilbury.

Art-ificial Intelligence

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG



BACKGROUND GRAPHIC COURTESY OF DOMINICK MANCO VIA DREAM AI/DREAMDIFFUSION

An artist sits at a desk, hunched not over palette, paper or drawing tablet but a keyboard, and contemplates what text prompt will produce the most vivid image. Text-to-image generative artificial intelligence (AI) has exploded in popularity in recent months, with OpenAI reporting in October 2022 that its image-generating AI model DALL-E 2—a play on the name of Spanish surrealist artist Salvador Dalí—has over three million users. As computer-generated images become less distinguishable from human-made ones, AI is redefining the boundaries of art.

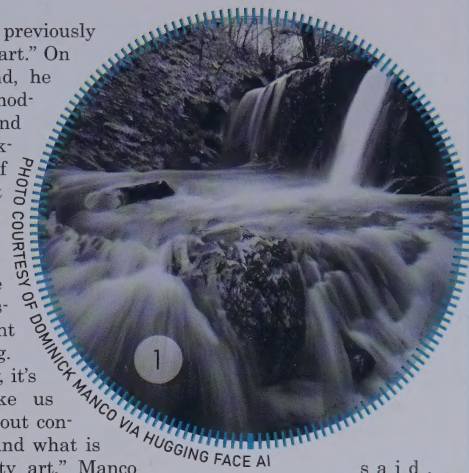
Class of 2022 Homestead graduate Jack Lauer, who has used AI software to create art, explained the more recent AI text-to-image models in terms of lucid dreaming:

"If you are capable of lucid dreaming and will a scene of "forest at night," then your brain will do it's [sic] best job to guess what that looks like based on your memories and the labels you assign to those memories. If you tell an AI software "forest at night", it will, in a similar way to a human mind, call through it's [sic] memories of millions of pictures with the labels of "forest" "nighttime" "night" "dark" "trees" etc. and pull patterns from all of the images to mix into one final image that becomes the output."

Using AI for art is not a completely new concept. In fact, image-editing software Adobe Photoshop introduced AI in its content-aware tools and features in 2016. Kate Tilbury (12), who learned how to use Adobe software in Digital Design, said, "The line between the sole artist being AI or human is blurred as modern digital art attempts to use AI features for faster production." Tilbury predicted that "the trend of artists using AI features will lead to a new movement" of using "artistic imagination following the AI-generated art production."

As AI models improve, opting for efficiency does not always mean sacrificing quality. In a Jan. 14, 2023 article published by *The Guardian*, Jo Lawson-Tancred challenged art historian Bendor Grosvenor, *ArtReview* editor JJ Charlesworth and London gallery owner Pilar Ordovas to distinguish between human-created and AI-generated pieces. In total, the art experts guessed correctly seven times out of 12.

In regard to AI's growing ability to mimic artists' styles, Homestead Photography and Digital Design teacher Dominick Manco sees two sides to the issue. First, he remarked that AI is "democratizing art and making art more available to people who were not previously able to create art." On the other hand, he noted that AI models' accuracy and speed is "making centuries of progress in art into a bit of a joke," as AI users can easily replicate the style that master artists spent decades honing.



"Ultimately, it's going to make us think more about connoisseurship and what is actually quality art," Manco said. "That can only make art better going forward."

Of his own experience, Manco warned that AI models are "not the magic tool that a lot of people think computers are going to be," comparing it to the public's initial reaction to Photoshop. Both the AI model and the software require the user to have prior art and design knowledge. Where Photoshop requires familiarity with the various digital tools, AI text-to-image models depend upon specificity and clarity in the prompt that the user inputs.

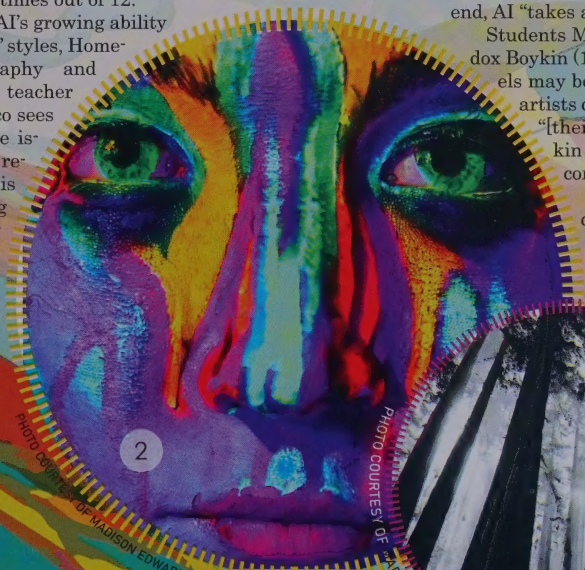
In the classroom and beyond, Manco has explored the limits of AI-generated images, which he first heard of in October 2022. Since then, he has introduced his Beginning and Advanced Photography students to the concept of AI models, gauging his students' reactions and predictions for how AI will influence the art world.

Bryson Leffers (11) was initially impressed with the capabilities of AI models on school laptop-friendly sites such as Hugging Face and Dezgo—both of which are powered by StabilityAI's model Stable Diffusion. Despite this, Leffers believes that in the end, AI "takes away from originality."

Students Madison Edwards, a graduating junior, and Maddox Boykin (11) agree, but each sees a future in which AI models may be used as an artistic tool. Edwards asserted that artists can use AI models without plagiarizing by adding "[their] own creativity, [their] own perspective." Boykin added that "people will, in the future, use AI in conjunction with their own skills."

Manco, too, foresees AI models becoming more common in the world of art. He emphasized the need to prioritize ethical use and development of the technology, and he plans to propose guidelines to help further these goals in the art department. He hopes to establish "a standard in which AI art is used as a tool to express our humanity and our intentions, and is not making us puppets of the technology."

In addition to pointing out the tendency of AI models to produce



1. "Photograph in Ansel Adam's style of waterfall"
2. "Girl with face paint under black light"
3. "Black and white image of a redwood forest"

"fake digital images of generic white people and smeared-looking PNGs" that "lack edge, decision, definitiveness, and integrity," Manco expanded on the implications of AI-generated art in his proposed guidelines:

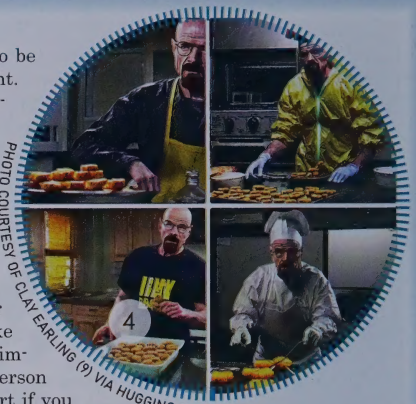
"Ultimately, art and life could become meaningless as we give control over to computers. We need to think hard about the aesthetics and the ethics of what we do and focus on us as humans. As individuals we are driven by a sense of purpose. Kierkegaard and Socrates teach us that this purpose can only be achieved through our decisions, deeds, and way of living. Giving our lives to computers defeats the purpose of living."

Such apprehension, whether philosophical or simply instinctive, has caused the role of AI in artistic spheres to be in limbo over the past years. In 2018, Paris-based art collective Obvious created "Portrait of Edmond Belamy" with an algorithm trained on a set of 14th- to 20th-century paintings; it became the first auctioned AI-generated artwork, selling for more than $432,000 at Christie's. Four years later, Colorado-based artist Jason M. Allen sparked backlash when his piece, "Théâtre D'opéra Spatial"—generated with AI model Midjourney—won a blue ribbon and $300 prize in the digital art division of the Colorado State Fair.

"What makes this AI different is that it's explicitly trained on current working artists... This thing wants our jobs, its [sic] actively anti-artist," tweeted California-based digital artist RJ Palmer (@arvalis) on Aug. 13, 2022, receiving over 24,900 likes.

The datasets of images, or the "memories" as Lauer referred to them, used to train AI models like Stable Diffusion are compiled by the nonprofit organization, Large-scale Artificial Intelligence Open Network (LAION). LAION datasets index links to images published on the internet. Through the site Have I Been Trained, people who did not consent to their photos being used to train AI models have discovered themselves or their art in datasets. In September 2022, California-based AI artist Lapine found private medical records, including photos of herself, in a LAION dataset.

These situations have raised questions about the ethics and copyright of AI-generated images. Manco supported placing regulations on AI datasets centered around artists' consent and non-copyrighted works. Palmer (@arvalis) and fellow artists have also brought attention to the seeming recreation of artists' signatures in the images generated by AI, especially as AI users attempt to imitate the style of certain artists. The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will help settle the question of copyright in the case of *Thaler v. Perlmutter et al.* Computer scientist Stephen Thaler seeks for his AI system Creativity Machine to be entitled to copyright. As it stands, copyright protections have only applied to human-made creations.

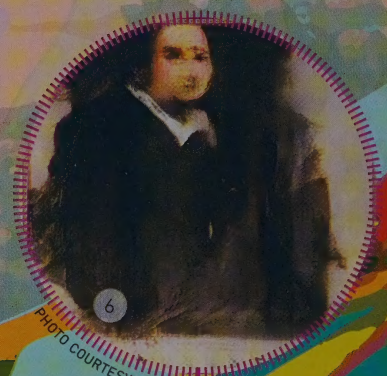


"The problem with wanting to slow down the rise of this AI is that it cannot be done," Lauer maintained. "Just like how you cannot criminalize a specific person from 'viewing' your art if you publish it, you cannot criminalize a bot for the same action... Like improvisation in jazz, artists steal ideas off of other artists and use them to make something new and creative, and by that logic AI is just a better artist than humans are and humans wanting to hold it back are jealous."

Under increasing pressure to take a stance on AI-generated images, platforms and art competitions have made varied decisions. Adobe Stock, Shutterstock and DeviantArt allow AI-generated images on their platforms and even introduced AI models of their own. DeviantArt, however, permits artists to opt out of the dataset used to train its AI model, DreamUp. On the other hand, platform Getty Images and the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards program ban the upload and entry of AI-generated images.

Amid all this, AI models continue to progress. In September 2022, Google released its text-to-3D model, DreamFusion. Still other AI models can generate short animations, videos and movie posters with synopses. Looking into the future, Lauer commented, "At the current moment, there are still many cases where humans can do a better job than AI, specifically regarding situations where the art needs to be specific. But, over time, these cases will dwindle to the point where human artists are no longer needed."

In contrast, Manco retains hope for the future of artists: "What I tell my students is that AI is the imitator, and humans are the innovators. I do not see a future in which AI technology becomes somehow sentient and can suddenly express what the human soul can express."



4. "Breaking bad man cooking chicken"
5. "Théâtre D'opéra Spatial"
6. "Portrait of Edmond Belamy"

KEN BLOCK: HHIC

written and designed by
SAMUEL COLE

On Jan. 2, 2022, Ken Block, a racing legend who co-founded DC Shoes and Hoonigan Racing, passed away at age 55 after a snowmobile accident. Hoonigan first announced the death on social media, followed by a confirmation from the Wasatch County Sheriff's Office that Block had tried to navigate up a steep slope, causing the craft to fall back on top of him. Officials pronounced him dead at the scene.

"Ken was a visionary, a pioneer and an icon. And most importantly, a father and a husband," Hoonigan wrote in the statement. "He will be incredibly missed."

Block co-founded DC Shoes, a popular skateboarding and shoe brand in 1994, building the brand into a global success through strategic sponsorships and athletes' endorsements. After selling the company in 2004 for $87 million, he became better known as a rally car legend, winning 16 national titles in the sport from 2005 to 2014. Block raced in around 150 total rallies, 23 of which were wins and 43 of which podiums. He also earned five medals in the X Games for rally racing and became one of only four Americans to score points in the World Rally Championship.

Block founded Hoonigan Industries in 2010 initially to support Hoonigan Racing Division and help him compete for world championships in rallying. The founding of the company gave him the title "HHIC" or "Head Hoonigan In Charge".

The team was first sponsored by energy drink company Monster, and was called Monster World Rally Team, but was later renamed Hoonigan Racing Division.

In addition to his performance in the car, Block has been a driving force in shedding light on the sport of rally within the United States. His keen branding and marketing acumen, combined with his talents and skills behind the wheel, has also allowed Block to achieve global fame as a rally driver through his wildly successful series of videos called Gymkhana—a franchise which has garnered over 600 million views on Youtube alone. Adding Climbkhana and Terrakhana to the franchises of videos in recent years, Block's media platforms continue to bring in new fans.

Block was also competitive in motocross and skateboarding, but his true call to fame was documenting his automotive aeronautics on social media. His YouTube channel, which amassed over 1.95 million subscribers, credits itself for driving America's burgeoning appreciation for motorsports. Block had shared pictures about the heavy snowfall at his Utah ranch on social media hours before the accident, writing, "hell yeah!" across an Instagram photo of snowmobiles.

Ken Block was the reason so many people got into rally racing, and the reason why even more wanted to build all-wheel-drive tire-shredding monsters. Block was truly an inspiration and an icon, he was one of the main reasons I, the writer, am into cars. Block was no stranger to the impossible and always looked for thrills.

Tributes to the icon were pouring in across his platforms on that morning. "Ken was truly an idol and inspiration for me, getting me into rally. [...] I've never been hit so hard by someone's passing," wrote Facebook user Troy Dawson. Dave Smith, a YouTube commenter wrote, "I never understood the draw to extreme sports until watching one of his videos. HE was the draw." Block's legend is likely to live on through the rally racing success of his family. His 16-year-old daughter, Lia, has been competing for Hoonigan racing since age 11 and his wife, Lucy, made her all-wheel-drive rally in 2022.

On Jan 19, 2022, Hoonigan released an update video, sharing details of what the team would do moving forward. The video ended with clips of a full-throttle life, full of victories and inspiring quotes. Also on Jan 19, Travis Pastrana, a close friend of Block and fellow rally driver, revealed a new livery for his rallycross car. This livery was a callback to Block's first and now iconic livery "Snow-Camo". The tribute livery also features gold accents and has a large, gold, "KB" on the side.

The motorsport world has continued to pay tribute to Block. Top Gear has come out with a memorial episode, DirtFish Rally School, members of the Dakar rally and members of the X Games, along with several famous racing drivers, have all paid homage to the fallen legend.

"If you aren't scared, you aren't going fast enough"
-Ken Block
1967-2023

Vinyl Revival:
The Resurgence of Vinyl Culture

written and designed by
ISABELLA AMBROSE

Vinyl History

The first vinyl record was produced by Columbia Records almost 100 years ago, in the early 1930's. Columbia Record's record was the first commercial long play record, or LP, to hit the market (however, vinyl records were not the first type of records on the market; shellac records, or the 78 rpm record, predated the vinyl record). LP sales got off to a slow start due to the Great Depression, but by the late 1940s, vinyl records were taking off. Instead of 5 minutes of playing time, the LP, or 33, could play an entire album. This was the greatest amount of listening time offered.

A Rivalry

RCA Victrola, Columbia Record's rival, introduced the 45 rpm record, or Extended Play record, less than a year after the release of the 33. Instead of having approximately 40 minutes of playing time, Victrola's EP had about 10 minutes of playing time. It was smaller than the 33, which made it easier to trade and collect. Despite this, 33's are the dominate type of record today.

The Golden Age of Vinyl

The popularity of records hit an all time high in the 1970's. They accounted for 66 percent of all music format revenues. In the 60's, record-changer company Dual released the first turntable with high-fidelity stereo playback. High-fidelity turntables allowed the consumer to customize their turntables with various pieces of equipment that would increase the sound quality of the records. The sound quality of record players increased, and so did the number of people with one in their home. Record players became a notable figure in everyone's life, and the music culture surrounding them was booming.

Competitors

However, new technologies, like the Walkman, CD player, IPod and streaming services gained popularity and left the vinyl record behind. They allowed the listener to take music on the go and they were compact, unlike some of the large turntables that were required to play records. New listening devices were more practical than their vintage counterparts. With so many pros for these new technologies, the end of vinyls was not far behind. Record sales reached an all time low in 2006. That same year, the world's most popular streaming service was released: Spotify.

GRAPHICS COURTESY OF: Columbia Records and RCA Victrola

Independent record stores began closing left and right. There was no market for records, so independent stores couldn't get any business. But unexpectedly, and after over 20 years of bad sales, vinyl record sales shot up in 2008. Since that year, record sales have been increasing, but why?

New Audience

A majority of customers buying records in 2008 weren't older generations; they were anyone between the ages of 13 and 35. In the time period of IPods and portable music, records gave young people a way to physically connect to music. Streaming services were not cutting it anymore; some listeners did not feel connected to their music, so records filled the gap between music and listener. Tanglibility and the connection to music are still reasons that people are buying records to this day.

Just a Trend?

Teenagers continue to be the main buyers and consumers of vinyl music today. In 2021, 15% of Gen Z had bought a vinyl record in the past 12 months. Besides providing a deeper connection to music, vinyl records have been circulating on social media. The prevalence of social media no doubt gave vinyl records another push for its ever-rising popularity. Over the last year or two, records have been trending on social media. For some teenagers, vinyl records could just be trend, but those trends are still contributing to the rise in vinyl record popularity. Even though a large majority of teenagers with records don't own a record player, collecting records is still contributing to music culture and history.

Why They're Around Today

For a variety of reasons, vinyl records have finally gained their rightful spot in music culture. Vinyl records provide an essence of connected-ness between music and listener that streaming services don't have. While streaming services may be more practical in our digital world, vinyl records provide the listener not just with music, but with an experience.

33 RPM Record

78 RPM Record

45 RPM Record

THE ERA OF DIGITAL MUSIC

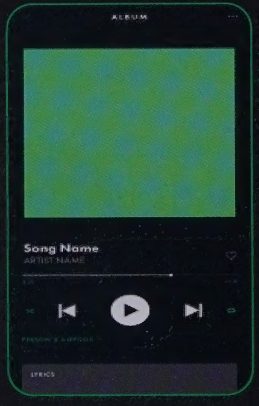
written and designed by
STELLA GRABLE

Now tell me, reader, is there any better feeling than rushing to the store in delighted anticipation, finding just what you want on chaotically organized shelves, swiftly purchasing your item and then looking at it with careful reverence, thinking: "This is mine"? Is there anything sweeter than the lingering joy that comes along with carefully tearing the thin plastic wrapping, looking at the tangible art between your fingers and sliding your new vinyl out of its sleeve?

This—this was the workings of music before the generation of you and I. This was the beginning of it all, folks—the awakening of music culture.

A thought that may be appalling to anyone over the age of 35 is that many people in Gen Z have never experienced this. Let's test your knowledge:
___How many record stores does Fort Wayne have?
___How do you use a record player?
___How many minutes can you fit on a CD?

Now, 20 years ago, almost anyone who was into music would have been able to answer those questions. But, with the rise of streaming platforms, we have lost that once common knowledge. Streaming culture isn't all bad, but it definitely has its drawbacks. The primary being a simple loss of music education.



Of course, if you know anything about music, you'll be able to tell me that music culture has changed throughout the eras. But one of the continuities before the age of streaming was the tangibility of music. Whether it be the ancients, beating their own drums 'round a campfire while young viewers witnessed the creation of sound before their very eyes, or angsty '90s teens, ready to rebel by spending their hard-earned minimum wage on CDs rather than saving for college ("C'mon mom, it's The White Stripes!"). In both scenarios there was a direct connection between the consumer and the artist. By giving up your capital, such as money or time, you were gaining a palpable piece of history. In a lot of ways, this benefited artists, allowing them to more directly foster a relationship and culture with their fans. In others, the digital age has been more beneficial than most would expect overall, yet, from an artist's standpoint, this isn't all good.

With the rise of digital music, artists are able to produce quality music faster, and consumers are more likely to seek it out due to its easy accessibility. The rise of Spotify and Apple Music have skyrocketed music consumption numbers

Not only has this affected the entire industry of physical music, but it also contributes to the underpaying of artists. With streaming platforms, most of the profits go to the platform rather than the artists themselves.

I should stop to explain how the money cycle in all of this works. First, the consumer pays their $10 Spotify subscription. Then, only about seven of those dollars get split between the producers, record labels, sound designers, arists, etc. The real kicker here is that Spotify gives these $7 to the record company, who then gets to decide the cut the artist will end up earning based on their numbers. So, essentially, unless you're Beyoncé level, you're not making much. This may be why some continue to buy records in an effort to more directly support the artists themselves.

Additionally, with increased consumption, there is an increased pressure on artists to create good albums in a short period of time. Streaming platforms, and possibly a change in social culture overall, has led to consumers not only wanting, but expecting fast and quality production. In the music industry, sacrificing quality can scarcely be avoided when focusing on speed.

However, not all artists reject the idea of streaming. As I mentioned before, it does make some things easier for the creator, You've probably noticed that in your lifetime, there are many more indie artists who "make it." This development can be attributed to the easy access of current music consumption. According to the Recording Industry Association of America, in 2018, streaming accounted for 71% of the music industry's revenue—a fact that almost no artist can be upset about. Streaming platforms like Spotify not only make it easy to find the music you are specifically seeking out, but they also have "recommended" features which help with the rise of new artists. What is better for a new and upcoming artist than to be compared to one of the classics?

As I mentioned briefly before, streaming cuture has contributed to a decline in physical music consumption. This may seem like no big deal, but when you consider that this was the foundation for previous music culture, this change becomes quite significant.

Have you ever wondered why our generation goes to significantly fewer concerts than our parents? Or why music festivals have become scarce?

Most music historians will say that this is not simply due to a rise in ticket prices, but instead is due to a change in the culture of consuming music.

When music was solely consumed in a tangible form, people felt a connection with the art they were listening to. It was an experience to have to leave your home and physically seek out the artists product that you wished to support. This showed to artists that their fans actually cared; it was meaningful that real people were willing to spend their time, gas, and money on the producers product. This created an innate bond between the artist and fan; it was not only a transaction, but an act of support.

Not only this, but it created a bond between the fans themselves. Fans realized that they had all paid the same money for this new album; they had all taken the time to seek it out, and choose it over the other albums of the period. These coinciding relationships are what made the public's attitude toward music respectful and passionate.

When people gathered together in concerts to experience their favorite artists, there was something special about that experience. People cared to support their favorite artist and each other. This was quite unique, as when you think about common economic principles: Yes, the producer and consumer need each other, but does that mean they necessarily like and respect each other?

With the rise of streaming culture, all of these main principles have been buried under accessibility. Music means so much less to most of us now than it did back then. We can sit in the comfort of our own home and listen to just about anything for free.

So I ask you, reader, was the accessibility worth it? There is no right or wrong answer here, as even artists can't agree on an answer. I think the one thing we can all agree on is that streaming platforms are not going away anytime soon, and even now, they dominate the music industry. Consumers and artists will have to conform to the era of digital music, but at what price?

Chat

What Is It and Why

written and
KATELYN

When asked what vegetable they are like, most chatbots are unable to answer, but when ChatGPT was asked the same question, it compared itself to a potato because "potatoes contain multiple layers and each layer has a different function and can be used for different things." The difference in answer shows the much higher sophistication of ChatGPT as opposed to other chatbots.

What is ChatGPT and Why Is It So Special?

ChatGPT is an Artificial Intelligance (AI) model that goes through an immense amount of data to answer any prompt the user provides. It was released on Nov. 30, 2022, and within days after its release, millions of people tried out the chatbot, asking it all different questions from how to fix advanced software code to the history of mac and cheese. The AI is currently available as a free research preview for anyone. Users were amazed at the fast and detailed answers. When prompted to give its uses, ChatGPT said text generation, completion and summarization, along with question answering, language translation, dialogue generation, text classification, and language modeling. Clayton Jones, a Homestead junior, describes ChatGPT as "the future of search engines." But AI that is able to answer questions provided by users has been around for years, so why has ChatGPT made such a huge impact?

The logo for OpenAI, aka the company that created ChatGPT

ChatGPT became well known so quickly because currently it has no direct competition. Unlike other technology which could serve the same basic purpose, ChatGPT is free, accessible from any web browser, and allows its users to format questions a variety of different ways. ChatGPT uses new technology, GPT3, which uses significantly more data than previous models and therefore has more capabilities. Jason Wang (11) said ChatGPT is "like Google, but gives you custom-tailored answers," referring to the ability of ChatGPT to let you choose the format of your answer. For example, ChatGPT can write a sentence summarizing a topic or write a three paragraph essay in seconds upon request.

The drawback of many AI programs is that text written by it can sound unnatural and mechanical, but ChatGPT has been specifically designed and trained to sound human, making it easier to understand. When discussing what makes ChatGPT different, Abdullah Mohammed (11), said ChatGPT is "light years ahead" of other AI and "just better."

Drawbacks of ChatGPT

While ChatGPT may seem limitless, it is far from that. When asked what the drawbacks are, ChatGPT itself says that its main drawbacks include lack of contextual understanding, possible bias based on the source text, lack of creativity in generated text, lack of suitability for certain tasks and limited understanding of certain languages. Many users notice that it can provide incorrect information in a very confident manner, meaning it can be hard to tell factual answers from fabricated answers. And, as Mohammed put it, ChatGPT is "good at what it's supposed to be used for, but people keep trying to use it for unintended purposes."

:GPT

Should You Care?

gned by
HWAB

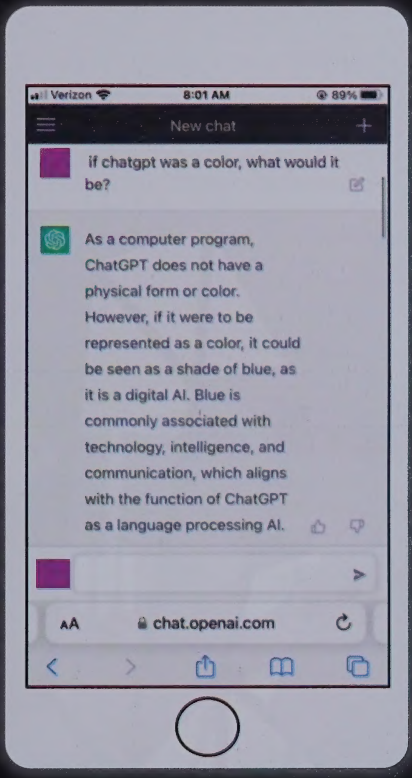
What Does ChatGPT Mean For Education?

Because of ChatGPT's variety of uses and easy accessibility, many educators feel it is inevitable ChatGPT will be misused by students since it is able to write an essay in seconds and answer prompts instantly. Some schools have already taken action against the misuse of ChatGPT for schoolwork, including New York City Schools, which blocked the chatbot at the end of December 2022. Teachers, specifically those who teach subjects that ChatGPT excels at answering prompts for, are discussing the possibility of transitioning to more in-class assignments instead of online to prevent the use of ChatGPT. Mr Schnaars, the computer science teacher at Homestead, feels it is "inevitable that AI will be brought into the classroom." He can see himself in the future having students complete assignments completely in class if he needs to assess whether or not a student has been cheating using programs such as ChatGPT.

One of the reasons teachers are worried about the use of ChatGPT in classrooms for prohibited uses is because programs that can currently detect AI writing are not commonly used or available, although they are being developed. Programs for detecting AI-written materials usually look for repeating phrases, a machine-like writing style and the complexity of the text. When trying to detect if a passage was written by AI, it is practically impossible to know for sure, as there is no definite source the student copied from. The best you can get is being pretty sure the passage sounds like it was written by AI. As Jason Wang put it, "Is reasonable certainty about cheating enough for knowing if it was written by AI?"

One of the biggest questions surrounding ChatGPT and education is when the use of it for an assignment becomes academic dishonesty? According to Maxwell Klema (12) it "depends on intent" and that "using ChatGPT for a whole essay is academic dishonesty, but using it to find a synonym or rephrase a sentence is not necessarily dishonesty...it's a blurry line what counts as academic dishonesty and is not clearly defined yet." and this may stay the case for the foreseeable future. ChatGPT itself says, "ChatGPT should be used as a tool to assist you in writing and editing your own work, not as a replacement for your own thinking and writing." This way of viewing ChatGPT is a popular one.

What ChatGPT means for the future of education is unclear as of right now. Some people think AI like ChatGPT will assimilate into the classroom, similarly to how calculators were originally shunned from math classrooms, but are now completely integrated into the curriculum.


Verizon
8:01 AM
89%
New chat
if chatgpt was a color, what would it be?
As a computer program, ChatGPT does not have a physical form or color. However, if it were to be represented as a color, it could be seen as a shade of blue, as it is a digital AI. Blue is commonly associated with technology, intelligence, and communication, which aligns with the function of ChatGPT as a language processing AI.
AA
chat.openai.com

An example conversaton with ChatGPT on a phone

Let It Be or Come Together?

The Revival of 20th Century Spirituality

written by
HUDSON MULHALL
designed by Azalea Orsini

The widespread use of the internet has renewed entire belief systems. This change is surprisingly radical, considering these beliefs often predate the internet. The new age of technology has revived New Age spirituality from the people of Woodstock to the Satanic Panic to the website Reddit which hosts tutorials on telepathy with a click.

What is the New Age? New Age is an umbrella term for beliefs of self-guided spiritualism, often based on astrology. For New Agers, spiritual practice can take the shape of anything from watching one's horoscope or attempting to reach a happier state of mind through Transcendental Meditation. The term "New Age" comes from another common New Age belief that humanity is entering a new astrological age, the Age of Aquarius. J. Gordon Melton, a famed American religious scholar of the New Age movement, described the Age of Aquarius as a "New Age of love, joy, peace, abundance, and harmony." The movement began to take shape with the promotion of this New Age of Aquarius being a part of many influential parts of 1960s counterculture. Notably, the opening to the musical Hair "Aquarius" and Woodstock posters calling the festival "An Aquarian Exposition." Even Beatles member George Harrison adopted Hindu philosophy (the basis for some common beliefs among New Agers, such as Transcendental Meditation) in his songs. The death of the hippie movement birthed the New Age movement. Its attraction of many former hippies and counter-culturalists cemented the terms used by the mid-1970s. New Age would grow throughout the 1970s and take on the broad meaning of individualistic spiritual practice rather than a coming age. The term even entered the mainstream with the invention of New Age Shops, which focused on selling products, such as crystals or incense, for practicing individualistic spiritualism. These shops would inspire a market for New Age books, like The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success by Deepak Chopra and The Secret by Rhonda Byrne, based on guiding people in their spiritualism. David Spangler developed many of the fundamental ideas of the New Age in his book Revelation: The Birth of a New Age and viewed its coming as a manifestation of New Agers' "energy," and called the New Age more of a "metaphor" in Decrystallizing the New Age. However, the tremendous growth of the culture was not without pushback. The movement always had psychedelic use, animalistic beliefs in the healing power of nature, and a focus on astrology in the community. Which ultimately caused it to be a significant target in the Satanic Panic of the late 1970s and the early 1980s.

The Satanic Panic was a media craze against perceived occult-like themes in children's media. Especially the tabletop game "Dungeons & Dragons" fueled by the disappearance of 16-year-old James Egbert III. He was an avid D&D player who the media believed to have gotten lost while participating in a D&D session turned near satanic ritual. In reality, he had run away to Louisiana from his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan; however, this did not stop the media from targeting and warning parents of almost all themes found within D&D, including astrology. Astrology is one of the main pillars of the New Age movement. This first criticism led to a wave of journalism investigating the practices of the New Age, in which many articles began to report and criticize the pseudo-scientific and "alternative medicine" processes that many New Agers believed in at the time—leading to the slow dwindling use of the term New Age. Gordon Melton noted in a 1994 conference paper that since no one was self-describing their practices as New Age anymore, the movement had fallen from the public's eye.

With the New Age's death by the end of the 20th century, what would the future look like for individualistic spiritual practitioners? The movement would continue to grow and spread, albeit with more diversity in beliefs than before. Alternative medicine and the criticism it created were the leading cause of the division in the community. Thus, many Europeans chose to adopt the term "New Stage" to distance themselves from the previous era of alternative medicine. In Taiwan, the movement as a whole has just started to gain popularity. With the rise of the internet and greater power to market ideas, alternative medicine has entered the mainstream. In 2015 the National Institute of Health found that nearly one-third of Americans seek holistic healthcare solutions.

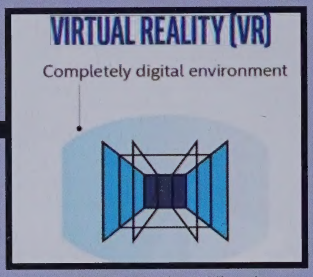
With this new spark of New Age-era alternative medicine fueled by social media, many people have different opinions about how the term New Age should be applied and whether the revival of 20th-century alternative medicine is dangerous. Self-described as "studying various spiritual beliefs," Reddit user and member of r/psychic u/WolframPsychica is not supportive of the resurrection of New Age practices, saying, "I see the revival of the New Age movement as negative. My issue is not strictly with non-scientific beliefs so much as with beliefs that purport themselves to be scientific," and that "technology informs the precepts of New Age beliefs directly," which are "inherently deceitful and predatory. More often than not, they are used to justify fraudulent economic markets." An interesting perspective that views the Internet's revival of the New Age and its alternative medicine as being purely practiced for economic gain. On the other end of the spectrum, Reddit user, self-described New Ager, and member of r/psychic u/TheVoid137 said that although "the old new age beliefs and the beliefs of now are pretty similar," the Internet has acted as "a kind of artificial idea of that interconnectedness, and it's something that works well when trying to describe that connection." Overall though, TheVoid137 thinks that "When it comes down to it though, I think people choose their beliefs and they are correct, no matter what they believe, because we as an extension of god create our own realities." And thus, the Internet as a whole has opened up a door for people to explore their beliefs while being in a community from their homes. However, not without revelations from the past does this resurrection come, as many believe it has once again opened the door for more people to be exposed to dangerous pseudo-scientific thinking and possibly harm themselves and others. Leetah Straley (9), a student who is involved with a lot of the connected communities to the New Age movement, stated that "technology has definitely improved the knowledge of Astrology and spirtualities," however, younger generations "don't read/do research [from] books as often as older generations" and as a result "we have a lot of different opinions and different information that we have found on the internet." So although the Internet has led to many more people joining and being involved with New Age beliefs, there is now much more separation within the movement. Straley explained that there have been pros and cons of influence from the internet. This enforces the idea that New Age belief systems are growing but demonstrates the evident change the movement has undergone. Straley sees her beliefs as a "mix between a lot of different spiritual practicess" and that "you don't necessarily just have to believe in one exact thing." For Straley and many others, the "modern" New Age means a kaleidoscope of beliefs long since evolved since the focus on the Age of Aquarius. In the case of alternative medicine, Straley has observed that "it's very common in all spirtual practices." She uses "[alternative medicine] quite a lot," and views alternative medicine as habits as simple as "drinking tea or getting a back massage." Overall the Internet spawned the revival of a community pronounced extinct by many academics and paved the way for new communities based on New Age beliefs to form and give a place for many.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE MEDICAL FIELD

written and designed by
ALESSIA PASSONI

New technology is taking over the medical field as we know it. Artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), 3D printing, robotics, as well as nanotechnology are becoming more popular by the minute. Doctors and specialists are embracing new technologies that have the potential to provide cheaper and faster routes of medication. AI algorithms are able to mine medical records and design treatment plans, They can also create drugs much faster than any current medical professional. In 2015, AI technology found two drugs that may significantly reduce Ebola infectivity. AI was also used for breast cancer analysis, which outperformed all human radiologists by 11.5%. Thmya is another example of an AI algorithm in the medical field. It's an AI-based video game that provides faster and more accurate mental health assessments. Patients are evaluated based on the video game they play so a baseline can be established. By studying the patient's facial features on video, the AI can help identify the likelihood and severity of depression.

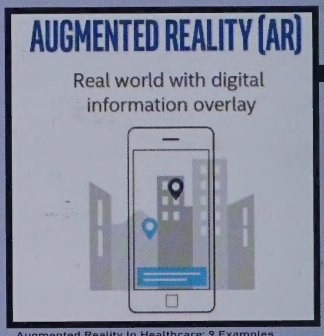
Use of AI in healthcare & medicine is booming – here's how the medical field is benefiting from AI in 2023 and beyond



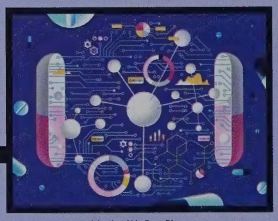
Augmented Reality In Healthcare: 9 Examples

Surgeons are being trained using VR technology that allows them to practice operations. The Harvard Business Review Study showed that those who trained in VR had a 230% performance boost in their overall performance. For patients, women in labor can be equipped with VR headsets to help them get through labor pains. They can look at soothing landscapes to help them relax. In addition to that, VR headsets can be given to patients suffering from gastrointestinal, cardiac, neurological, as well as post-surgical pain in order to help distract them from the painful stimuli.

Augmented reality differs from VR as it allows the individuals using it to not lose touch with reality. It also puts information into eyesight as fast as possible. This is useful for medical students as they can better prepare for real-life operations and enhance their capabilities. At Case Western Reserve University, students are using Microsoft HoloLens to study anatomy with the HoloAnatomy app. This method allows students to have access to detailed, visual, and depictions of the human anatomy without the need for real-life bodies.



Augmented Reality In Healthcare: 9 Examples



Adopting AI in Drug Discovery

The current process of creating new drugs is not only expensive but time-consuming. AI companies like Turbine, Recursion Pharmaceuticals, along with Deep Genomics believe that AI will be able to develop new drug candidates which can both speed up the market and save money and lives. Another promising health technology is in silico drug trials. These are individualized computer simulations used in the development or regulatory evaluation of a medical product or devices. Because of this, new medications and ideas can be tested on virtual patients, helping improve the study of heart disease and osteoporosis.

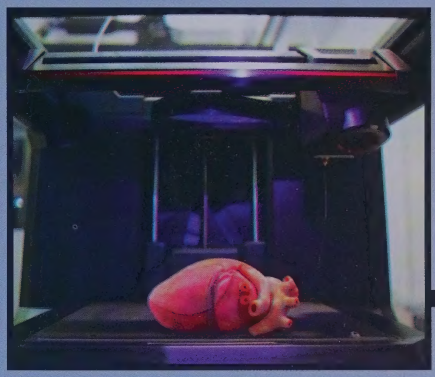
Nanomedicine is becoming more and more popular as time progresses. In 2014, researchers from Max Planck designed microbots that acted as a pill but would instead observe the colon in a patient-friendly way. In 2018, MIT researchers created an electronic pill that could be controlled wirelessly and could relay information or release drugs in response to smartphone commands. In 2020, France-based company Grapheal proved that its smart patches are effective. They continuously monitor wounds and the graphene core of the patch can strengthen the healing of the wounds.

Nanotechnology in Medicine: Technology Trends

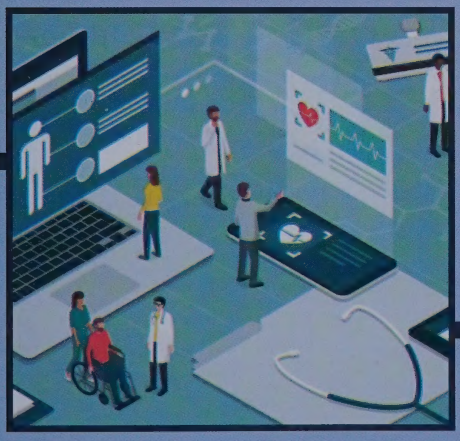
Robotics Careers in Medicine and Health

Robotics also have their place in healthcare. Robots are used to help those dealing with loneliness and mental-health related issues Some robots even have sensors and cameras which allow children to interact with them. Some monitor medication and temperature in addition to monitoring breathing rates while playing music to distract children from illness.

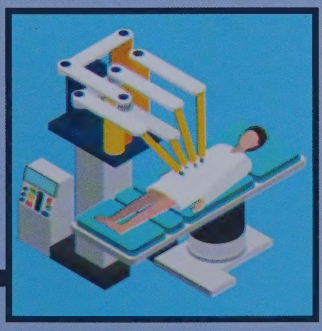
3-D printing is making huge improvements in healthcare. Prosthetics, artificial limbs, bio tissue, pills, as well as blood vessels can be 3-D printed. In 2019, researchers at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York developed a way to 3-D print living skin with blood vessels. This was crucial for skin grafts for burn victims. Researchers are now working on printing polypills which would contain several layers of drugs in order to help patients stick to their therapeutic plan. At the Texas Heart Institute, Doris Taylor found a way to regenerate heart construction. These ghost organs are animal hearts that have been stripped of their original cells that can be used in this process. They are then injected with stem cells in order to create a personalized heart for the individual. Not only is this reducing the need for drugs, but it also reduces the cost as individual cells are used. In addition to that, people aren't in the hospital as often so it will improve their quality of life.



3D-printed organs and their affordability



Six Healthcare Technologies Coming in the Next 10 Years



How artificial intelligence is changing the healthcare landscape

Technology continues to grow and develop as we find more and more uses for it. It has benefited our healthcare system and will continue to be used to further our understanding of both technology and people. Who knows what's in store for the future?

Neuralink: Riding the Brainwave

written and designed by
HANNAH SHAW & GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

Our everyday lives are dominated by the presence of technology, from Roombas, automatic cat feeders and Alexas in our homes to laptops, tablets and ChatGPT in our schools. As technology corners in on us from all sides, there is only one place left for it to go: our brains. Spurred by the spirit of innovation, Elon Musk created Neuralink discreetly in 2016 with the purpose of creating a chip that would be able to blend biological matter with computer processes. The product of his company was revealed to the general public in 2019 with a live-streamed presentation including diagrams, pictures of individual components and additional speakers to explain mechanical processes.

How Neuralink Works

The brain is comprised of 86 billion neurons that are constantly sending signals to one another, which, in turn, transform into physical and mental sensations like emotion, thought, sight and touch. Humanity already has ways of studying neuron activity in the form of PET scans, functional MRIs, EEG and so forth. In Musk's opinion, the problem with non-invasive methods is that they collect data from outside of the brain and record a sum of the activity performed by a collection of neurons. This produces results that, although helpful, may also be muddled.

Neuralink intends to harness the power of a neuron and put it into the hands of the individual through fine-scale recordings. The brain-computer interface (BCI)—a device allowing for direct connection between brain activity and an external device—is composed of three main parts: the link, the neural threads and the charger. The link is the device implanted in the brain to process and transmit neural signals. The threads are extremely thin, meant to replicate real neurons and contain electrodes to detect neural signals. The charger connects wirelessly to the implant from the outside of the individual's head.

There are, of course, a plethora of precautions necessary to create such a device. The threads are all coated in an adhesive corrosion-resistant layer to protect them from the brain's fluid. Additionally, the link has high-performance signal amplifiers to ensure that the tiny neural signals can be collected and the chip is being built in as few separate pieces as possible to eliminate the risk of damage from fluids and salts in the brain.

Along with the difficulties of building the device, the process of implanting Neuralink is not simple. In fact, the threads of the device are so fragile that they cannot be placed correctly by humans. To combat this, Neuralink is developing a precise and cautious robot that can perform the intense details of the procedure. Once the chip has been implanted, the patient downloads the Neuralink app and Bluetooth connects to it in order to work through training exercises.

But what sets Neuralink apart from other BCIs is the number of electrodes. Because the current BCI technology is meant to monitor activity over a large section of the brain and not transfer information in and out of the brain, they only need at most ten much larger electrodes. Neuralink has 1024 electrodes which are much smaller, which is necessary because they intend to thread them over the brain following its shape.

Musk and the team at Neuralink plan to create a device that will primarily help people who are suffering from neurological disorders or are quadriplegic. Hypothetically, a patient with the Neuralink implant-

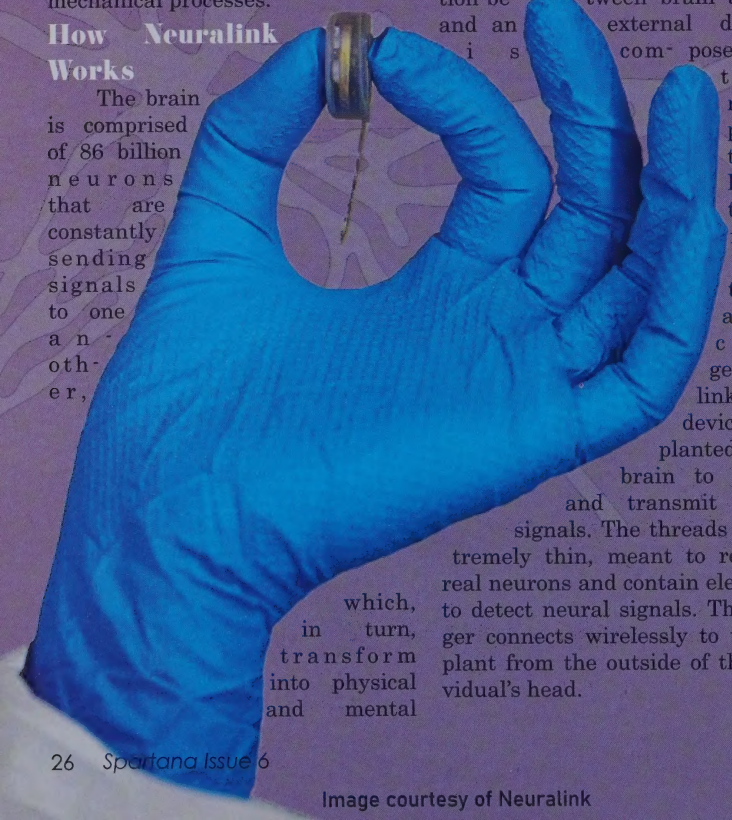


Image courtesy of Neuralink

ed could move and use a computer cursor with only their thoughts. Furthermore, they hope to repair function in the visual, auditory, somatosensory and motor cortexes. It will do this by reading all the brain activity in real-time and having the link translate that activity into the movement the patient had intended. As of now, the goal is to allow people to use technology who normally can't, such as computer cursors, keyboards and game controllers.

That being said, Musk also hopes to create a device that is both safe and interesting enough to entice the general public into wanting one. This may involve different apps or ways for them to express their creativity or even more practical interests such as easier communication.

Controversy

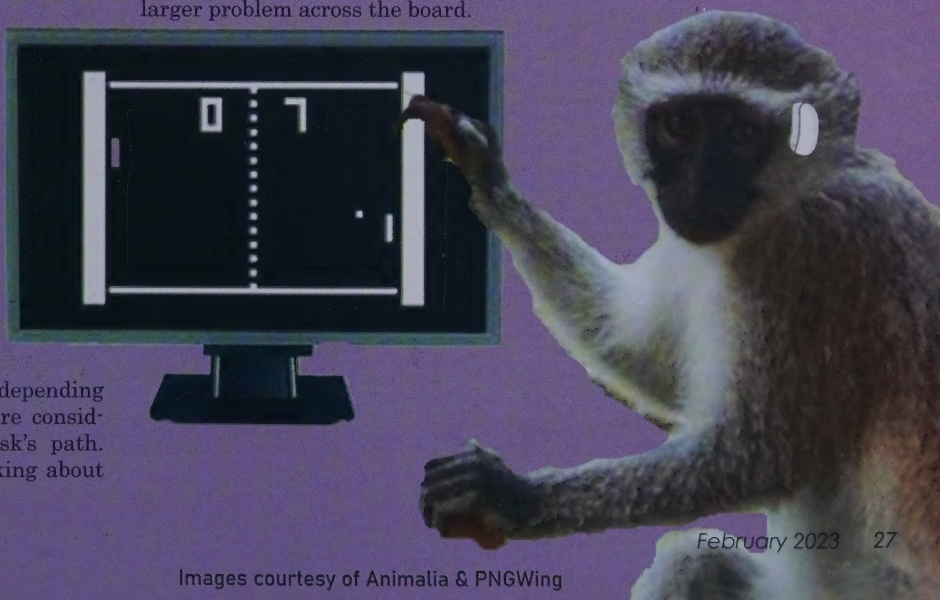
Neuralink's mission is to use this technology to help people with disabilities and expand scientific horizons; however, scientists and the public have expressed cautious optimism towards the company's project, tending to lean more towards caution.

Although BCI has existed since the 2000s and the market is only set to accelerate in the coming years, Neuralink has received extra attention in the media due to Elon Musk's notoriety. What makes Elon Musk's Neuralink chip so controversial for some are the implications of blending a for-profit company and a technological innovation created to help those with physical disabilities. Dr. L. Syd Johnson, associate professor in the Center for Bioethics and Humanities at SUNY Upstate Medical University, has stated that depending on market size, there are considerable obstacles in Musk's path. "If we're really only talking about developing them for paralyzed individuals—the market is small, the devices are expensive." On the other hand, "if the ultimate goal is to use the acquired brain data for other devices, or use these devices for other things—say, to drive cars, to drive Teslas—then there might be a much, much bigger market," she said. "But then all those human research subjects—people with genuine needs—are being exploited and used in risky research for someone else's commercial gain."

Neuralink has also inspired a host of scientific speculation, of which many are reminiscent of questions that Black Mirror premises present. Many of the answers that have been drummed up are purely conjecture as the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) is still reviewing the chip for human trials.

Meanwhile, inner turmoil has tormented the Neuralink workplace. Former employees in an interview with Fortune revealed that Musk specifically has created a toxic work environment driven by fear and his demands to accelerate the development of the chip. As a result of this intense pressure, leadership at Neuralink has a high turnover rate. The same is often said of the workplace environments in SpaceX and Tesla, indicating that this is a larger problem across the board.

What is unique to Neuralink, however, is the federal probe into potential animal cruelty allegations. Opened at the tail end of 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture began to look into potential violations of the Animal Welfare Act, which determines how researchers test and treat animals. Musk's attempts to speed up development has resulted in failed experiments, causing those experiments on animals to be repeated multiple times, increasing the number of animal deaths. Around 1,500 animals have been killed by Neuralink, including sheep, pigs, monkeys, mice and rats. However, number of animals does not necessarily mean that the law has been violated. Companies who test on animals for the human health care market commonly kill animals after tests to examine the effects of a drug or instrument postmortem, but former employees claim that the number of animals killed exceeds the amount that it should be. A year ago, the Neuralink Youtube channel posted a video of Pager, a Macaque, playing Mindpong and a month ago they uploaded a video on animal care at their facility.



Images courtesy of Animalia & PNGWing

CRYPTOCURREN

written and
YEVVA

CRYPTOCURRENCY

Despite the increasing use of the word, "cryptocurrency," many do not understand what it is, how it works and why it's growing as a form of currency. Austen Chenkanh (12) explained, "It's like an economics subject, in terms of business, and [this] will turn down a lot of people in the younger generation." Cryptocurrency, known most popularly by the brand name Bitcoin, is a form of currency that exists digitally and functions through a decentralized system. A decentralized system is a system that moves control from a single place to many smaller places. Cryptocurrency makes it nearly impossible for the government to track transactions, which is one of its main attractions to investors. Lance Holder (10) believes that although cryptocurrency, "Is confusing because it is such a new and innovative thing" it will become, "More and more normalized with time.

MINING FOR GOODS

Mining for cryptocurrency is plugging in input values, in order to be the first to solve the expression or output. This creates a new block, which is then added to the blockchain. Bitcoin monitors how many "miners" there are and how often they solve a block to adjust the difficulty of mining. The adjusted difficulty ensures a new block is discovered every ten minutes on average. Bitcoin's system makes it more valuable than most other cryptocurrencies. Holder, a sophomore, shared that "Bitcoin, in essence, is a limited resource because there will only ever be 21 million, and... if you can't make more of something, there will be an element of scarcity, sort of like gold."

A BLOCK IN THE BLOCKCHAIN

The blockchain is essentially a list of all cryptocurrency transactions. This is where trading, buying and every discovery of Bitcoin is recorded. A singular block is worth about 6.25 Bitcoin for miners. The blockchain is similar to a shopkeeper's list of all their transactions in one day. These blocks are a distributed database linked together with cryptography, the art of writing or solving codes.

HASHING

Hashing is the gambling portion of mining for cryptocurrency. It can be described as a long list of letters and numbers that solve a mathematical hash function. For example, the combination "zack23smith" could be the hash input for the outcome "03". This is one reason cryptocurrency is invulnerable. These hash functions are also meant to encrypt cryptocurrency transactions, securing user privacy. Software designed to solve these hash functions tries as many hash combinations as possible until one works. The miner might discover the correct hash on the first try or after many tries, but they also face the challenge of trying to guess the correct hash before other miners. Since this hash value is entirely random, it brings a sense of luck. To further the stakes, miners may spend thousands of dollars on equipment, but the potential payout is never ensured. The computers and software meant for mining typically use an amount of energy equivalent to nine American households every year. Some miners give their graphics processing units (GPUs) to a larger mining service to cut costs and increase benefits.

THE PUBLIC LEDGER

After Bitcoin is mined, it is continually traded. The public ledger, part of the blockchain, publicly records all Bitcoin commerce, but it keeps user identity anonymous with a pseudo name. In order to confirm the validity of a transaction, many nodes (computers in the network) must approve the transaction through a majority consensus. The people running these computers are given small percentages of the cryptocurrency validated in the transaction or other little incentives to accurately verify these transactions.

CY AND CODING

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THE VALUE OF CRYPTOCURRENCY

The value of cryptocurrency can fluctuate wildly, from its all-time high of $69,000 per Bitcoin to its lowest value ever of 0.3 cents around its first launch. The price of Bitcoin is determined by supply and demand, in other words, how much people are willing to pay. Chenkanh (12) said cryptocurrency "is similar to stock market prices -- it's about the risk." This can make Bitcoin seem like a risky investment, but junior Yousef Hamed said that "If you're willing to buy an asset, you have to be able to risk the reward." Cryptocurrency's demand has been increasing as investors realize the benefits of exchanging untraceable currencies, avoiding complex conversions of cash and evading delivery of large sums of money, but many predict its value will begin to only decrease. Holder (10) said, "Things like FTX... are going to down track the value," but despite its probable decrease he, "can never see Bitcoin ever being worth zero because of its limit."

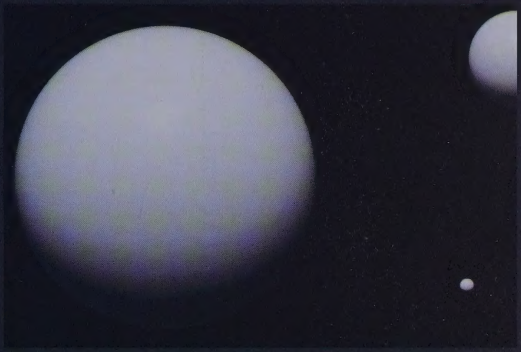
FLAWS AND FRAUDS

In November 2022, the world's third-largest digital trading asset company, Futures Exchange (FTX), declared bankruptcy after committing fraud. After many withdrawals from spooked investors, FTX had to reveal its lack of sufficient assets for customer demand. Sam Bankman- Fried, the founder of FTX, admitted to mismanaging funds and lacking liquidity. FTX's sudden collapse spooked thousands of investors in the digital currency market. Additionally, cryptocurrency is extremely energy-consuming, but in comparison to the creation of paper money, production and energy consumption are similar. Hamed (11) said cryptocurrency, "Could help with unethical [production], so in the future, we won't have to use up as many resources." Plus, the majority of cryptocurrencies can be mined forever, making them susceptible to inflation.

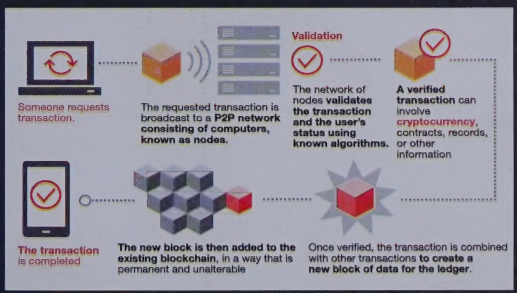
NFTS

One of the most controversial versions of digital assets is non-fungible tokens (NFTs). NFTs are similar to cryptocurrencies, but instead, are digital art sold as a link or jpeg. Sellers add their digital art or images to the blockchain, and then people buy them for a certain price with the intent that they will increase in value. The public ledger system makes verifying ownership and authenticity easy to prove, but NFTs make it easy to steal artists' work by screenshotting.

The Largest Bitcoin Warehouse in Russia
COURTESY OF BLOOMBERG.COM



The Merge NFT Collection Sold for $ 91.8 Million
COURTESY OF NIFTY GATEWAY


Someone requests transaction.
The requested transaction is broadcast to a P2P network consisting of computers, known as nodes.
Validation
The network of nodes validates the transaction and the user's status using known algorithms.
A verified transaction can involve cryptocurrency, contracts, records, or other information
The transaction is completed
The new block is then added to the existing blockchain, in a way that is permanent and unalterable
Once verified, the transaction is combined with other transactions to create a new block of data for the ledger.

The Process of the Blockchain
COURTESY OF PRICEWATERHOUSECOMPANY

BIG TECH BATTLEGROUND

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT & THOMAS HILL

Elon Musk's purchase of Twitter in 2022 has reignited the debate surrounding free speech in the online world, specifically on social media platforms.

In little over a decade, social media and the internet have become the new public square. Public discourse and the exchange of ideas no longer takes place mainly in face-to-face conversations, libraries, schools or even on radio and television.

Instead, the primary forums for sharing opinions are social media platforms like Twitter, TikTok and Instagram.

This shift accelerated with the election of Donald Trump in 2016, who was the first sitting president to use Twitter as his main method for communication with his supporters and opponents. In the years since, high-profile conservative pundits like Tucker Carlson have alleged that social media platforms have intentionally censored right-wing accounts and manipulated the algorithm to hide certain content. On the other hand, liberal pundits like Rachel Maddow defended Big Tech's content moderation as a prevention of hate speech and disinformation.

Photo credit: Patrick T. Fallon

According to a September 2021 poll conducted by Pew Research, 72 percent of all American adults are on one or more social media platforms. While social media is used by many to simply connect with friends and family, there are many Americans who use social media as their primary news source. In the same study from Pew Research, 48 percent of Americans often turn to social media for updates on current events and news.

Because of the massive amount of information that is on the internet, it is becoming increasingly easy for people to mistakenly believe inaccurate information that they see on social media. The need for some sort of restrictions seems dire, but naturally, people disagree on the extent of these restrictions and how they should be enforced.

Billionaire and Tesla CEO Elon Musk purchased social media platform Twitter in October 2022 for around $44 billion. For some, this news was a victory in the name of free speech, while others considered it a threat to the credibility and safety of the platform. Musk has been an advocate for less-restrictive social media platforms that would allow people to say what they want to within the constraints of the Constitution. In addition to the new $8-per-month charge for a blue checkmark, Musk has announced many other changes that he intends to make to the platform's policy. For example, Musk announced that all tweets that share someone's location will be removed due to the "increased risk of physical harm" that this action creates.

Another update that Musk has recently added to Twitter's policy is that users "may not use Twitter's services in a manner intended to artificially amplify or suppress information or engage in behavior that manipulates or disrupts people's experience on Twitter."

Musk has also reinstated the accounts of around 60,000 users who were removed for violating Twitter's policies. Among these individuals are Kanye West, Donald Trump and Jordan Peterson. Musk said that this is because he wants to start over with a clean slate.

Because Musk has been vocal about his belief in lessening restrictions in an effort to make the platform more conducive to free speech, it is expected that he will make more changes to the Twitter policy in the future.

Isaac Schroeder (9) believes that "Musk purchased Twitter with the goals of eliminating political censorship and creating an open forum for people to debate issues important to our society."

Almost all of the big social media platforms have enacted their own version of fact-checking information posted by users. For example, in 2018, YouTube began adding information panels to videos that concerned potentially controversial topics such as Covid-19 and election processes.

YouTube states that these panels are used to deal with "misinformation that comes up quickly as part of a fast-moving news cycle, where unfounded claims and uncertainty about facts are common."

Meta, the company that owns and controls Instagram and Facebook, also uses a fact-checking system. These social media platforms, as well as other tech corporations, use the ClaimReview tagging system. ClaimReview is an organization that

allows third-party fact-checkers from major publications to flag digital articles and social media posts that are inaccurate.

A few of the most prominent fact-checking publications are Washington Post Fact Checker, PolitiFact and FactCheck.org. Google News, Bing, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube all use the ClaimReview system and its fact checkers on their platforms.

However, many have challenged the use of fact-checkers, claiming that many fact-checks are applied based on political biases in order to discredit viewpoints or information that Big Tech does not support.

A prominent example of this is information surrounding the Covid-19 vaccine. In 2021, many right-wing figures made posts questioning the safety of these vaccines, citing reports of side effects. At the time, these posts were fact-checked as mis- or disinformation. Now, in 2023, the Food and Drug Association has acknowledged some of these side effects and concerns as legitimate, citing much of the same information that right-wing figures did in 2021.

On the other hand, many on the left defend fact-checkers as legitimate attempts to prevent the spread of mis- and disinformation. Because the reports were not at the time validated by the FDA, the fact-checks were simply an attempt to keep social media discourse about the vaccine centered on information known to be true.

The fact-checkers are but one facet of the free speech debate. A bigger concern for Big Tech critics is Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. Section 230 protects Big Tech companies from being held liable for anything posted on their platforms, which allows them to exist as free speech platforms rather than publishers of content posted on their platforms.

However, Big Tech companies have engaged in content moderation despite their protections under Section 230, leading many to accuse them of acting as publishersbeing immune from legal liability for their actions, such as bans, suspensions and fact-checks. Section 230's protections have allowed companies like Google, Facebook and Twitter to be both publishers and platforms, without any path for recourse by those who feel they have been unfairly punished by these companies.

An upcoming Supreme Court case, *Gonzalez v. Google*, challenges Section 230 by asking if Big Tech is protected from legal liability for hosting and promoting terrorist content with their algorithms. This could lead to Section 230 being struck down or at least narrowed in terms of what it protects.

Furthermore, Congress has expressed concern about Section 230 and could potentially create legislation that would narrow what Big Tech companies can and cannot be held liable for, as well as address free speech concerns and determine to what extent these companies can restrict speech.

Another issue with the regulation of Big Tech is its effective monopoly over the digital realm. A small group of companies—Alphabet (Google), Meta (Facebook), Apple, Microsoft and Amazon—dominate the digital market and own the vast majority of platforms outright or as subsidiaries. There have been bipartisan calls for antitrust legislation and efforts against this monopoly, but little progress has been made outside of investigations.

A prominent example of the Big Tech monopoly is the small, free speech-focused Twitter alternative Parler. A few days after Jan. 6, 2021, at a moment when Parler was exploding in popularity due to then-President Trump being banned from Twitter, Apple announced that they would be removing Parler from the App Store. Google followed suit soon after, and Amazon Web Services soon shut down Parler entirely.

The companies claimed that these actions were taken because the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol had been planned in part on Parler, and Parler had refused to engage in any content moderation. However, it was later revealed that Facebook groups had played an even greater role in the planning of Jan. 6, with no recourse taken against Meta.This incident is viewed by many as an attempt by the Big Tech monopoly to remove a competitor.

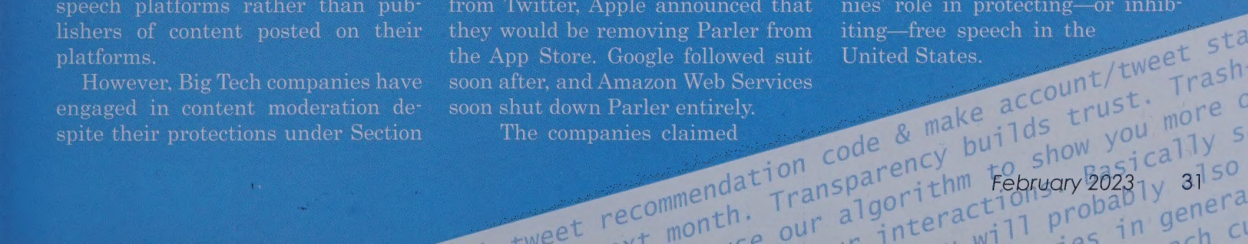
These debates around free speech on social media will only continue as technology becomes a more integral part of society, and there will be continued questions about what Big Tech's role and liability should be in upholding free speech and how much power they should have.

Elon Musk's "Twitter Files" have added fuel to the fire, revealing records of collusion between Big Tech companies and government officials to censor certain viewpoints, as well as biased content moderation by Big Tech employees.

Whether or not certain posts should be censored is another major concern regarding free speech. Schroder said that "while censorship of ideas is immoral, censorship of cuss words, explicit images and violations of the law are moral. Even though some Big Tech requires an age limit to be met for an account, many children still view posts on Big Tech. It is important that kids are not exposed to violent words and images."

Most Americans agree that there should be some limits on what can and cannot be posted, but where that line is drawn is up for debate.

Freedom of speech is an essential part of the American experiment, and the eyes of the public will be on the Supreme Court and Congress as they start to address major concerns regarding Big Tech and those companies' role in protecting—or inhibiting—free speech in the United States.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OPINION

Should Homes
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Written and Desi

Some arguments never end: Vanilla or chocolate? Apple juice or orange juice? Fame or wealth? One of these trivial arguments, however, is becoming more relevant at Homestead: Windows or Mac? The debate that goes back as far as 1985 finds itself still relevant today as laptops improve in quality and accessibility. Every four years, Homestead upgrades its laptops, and we're inching closer to the 2024-2025 school year. What are the arguments for MacBooks in education, and are they feasible for Homestead?

There are a few things to establish about Windows and macOS before anything else. Firstly, the Windows operating system (OS) is licensed by Microsoft to different manufacturers, such as Lenovo, Dell and HP. MacOS, on the other hand, is only available on Apple's MacBooks. This means that there are far more and far cheaper options for Windows machines. Cheaper doesn't necessarily mean better, though. The lower the price of a laptop, the less functionality, quality of the experience and power you typically get. MacBooks are all on the more expensive side, but Apple offers bulk discounts to educational institutions.

Don Chase is the director of SACS Education Technology Services (SETS). SETS is in charge of all things technology in the district, including our laptops. While Chase was open to the idea, he said he "[hasn't] considered MacBooks" for this school year, but SETS "did consider MacBooks about seven years ago. We had a group of students back then do some evaluations. They preferred the Macs. Apple just couldn't get it into a price point that fit our budget." That price point tha Apple gave in 2015 was $950 per device—$15 over the school's budget. Although, Chase said he believed that "[Apple's] prices have gone down since that time period." As much as MacBook would be a more expensive option, the trade-in value for Macs is much better. Chase went as fa as to say that the trade-in value is "notoriously greater than a trade-in value for a Dell or a Le novo." That may balance things out long-term

In theory, a MacBook could do any school-relat ed browser function as well as a Windows laptop a Chromebook or even an iPad could. So what the difference? For starters, MacBooks are consis tently lighter than any comparable Windows lap top, especially the MacBook air (Your back wi thank you!). The hardware on a MacBook is muc more reliable, with outstanding keyboards and completely superior trackpad. The speakers, a beit rarely used in a school setting, are also muc better than the current laptops Homestead use

On the software front, MacBooks also hav benefits. For world language classes, MacOS ha an unequivocally better solution to accent mark letting you hold down a key to get a selection accents for that letter. That might not sound lik much, but the amount of digital work done i world language classes is growing, and so muc time is wasted with copy and pasting. For iPhon users (the vast majority of Americans, let alon Homestead students), macOS has a very simila

ead Switch to ooks?

d by Azalea Orsini

feel and a much more intuitive way of navigating around the OS. Obviously, that isn't enough to merit a switch to Macs, but these things truly do add up and making our tech more accessible for students to understand is always a bonus.

When it comes to more niche uses, design immediately comes to mind. From Homestead's HHS in Depth team, Michelle Obioma (12) has plenty of reasons for using a MacBook as her personal and work computer. "I find that the MacBook has the capacity to handle more strenuous applications, like Adobe After Effects and Adobe Premiere," Michelle said. When it comes to creating HHS in Depth, programs like these are crucial. "Sometimes, some in the class aren't able to open or try out intense software, like Adobe After Effects, with out our current computers buckling under pressure and force quitting the application. Also, when we record footage on a camera like a Lumix—a camera that records in 4k and has notoriously big files—editing can really become a game of tug-o-war between the school computer and editing software." For the Spartana, programs such as Illustrator and InDesign are prone to the same crashing on the current laptops. Macs, which are extremely optimized to run Adobe applications, don't have this issue.

As mentioned before, Summit and Woodside have switched to iPads for this school year; that begs the question: does switching to Macs benefit the incoming students who have been using iPads for 3 years? Chase said that "it [would] be a nice transition from iPads to Macbook Airs, where you're taking advantage of that same software that you have in an iPad." With similar software and user interfaces, the learning curve from an iPad to a MacBook would be smaller.

Rain or shine, hot or cold, Mac or Windows, Homestead will live on in tandem with technology. Either way, students will be able to learn, create, and engage with any device they're given; but as technology evolves, it makes sense to accommodate for the aspects of students' experiences that would make the use of technology friendly and accessible.

Top Stories

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Trending

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Stella Grable

Big Tech Battleground
Thomas Hill, Elaina Schilt

OPINION

The Modern Phenomena of Stay-at-Home Girlfriends

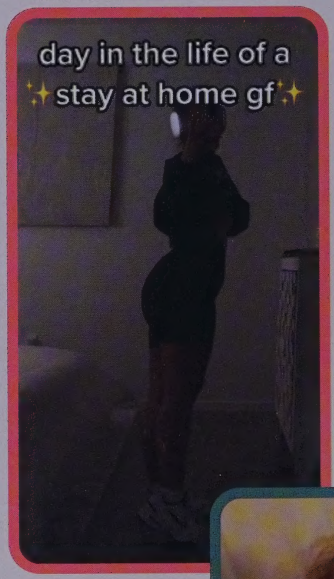
written and designed by
GAIA SPLENDORE

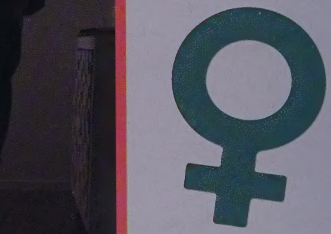
Young women are devoting their lives to homemaking, their jobs being cleaning and running errands. No, the Cult of Domesticity is not back in full swing, but rather there's a new trendy lifestyle presented on the internet—stay-at-home girlfriends. Invoking the title of stay-at-home parent, these women are unemployed, with their work focusing on upkeep of the home. However, the central difference is that these women do not have children.

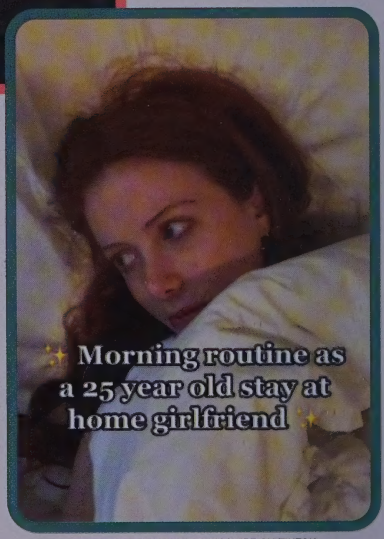
The people taking part in this lifestyle are twenty-something-year-old, mainly white, women who, according to a plethora of "day in the life" TikToks, spend their time cleaning, cooking and working on their hobbies. Creator Kendelkay, for instance, uploaded a vlog of her day as a stay-at-home girlfriend and received 12.9 million views. Most times, these women are also financially dependent on their boyfriends, not having an income of their own. Having no employers or schedules, these women decide what their days and responsibilities look like.

The lifestyle is, in essence, relaxed. However, society's response to these women has been anything but. First, the women themselves are heavily critiqued, then the critics got a taste of their own medicine, and so on. Being a divisive topic, the argument over stay-at-home girlfriends spun out to cover many discussions over feminism, a woman's autonomy, productivity and more.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ASHLEY GARCIA ON TIKTOK







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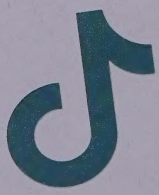


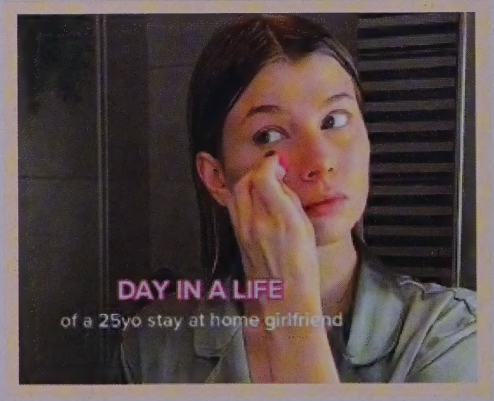


PHOTO COURTESY OF KATESTHET ON TIKTOK

Firstly, upon a boom in popularity on TikTok, stay-at-home girlfriends were immediately criticized. It started with other women saying that these women are living unfulfilling, redundant lives. On a stay-at-home girlfriend day in the life TikTok, user clementmarshall commented, "I have never seen anyone live a life that looks less fulfilling" and the top comment under that same video from fridasonderdahl said, "It's like the day never starts." Their claim is that these women were transported back into the 1950s by staying at home and bending to their male partners will, as he, the one with the money, will inherently have power over the woman.

For instance, TikTok creator sommertothill said in one of her videos, "When you stay at home and support your boyfriend to go to work and earn his money and develop in his career, you are not receiving any of those things for yourself—you are not building your finances, you are not developing your own career, and you are not contributing to your retirement fund."

Also, taking a more pragmatic approach, critics question what would happen if the two break-up or if the woman is being abused. Because you can't necessarily put cooking and cleaning on a resume and it seems that these women have no savings of their own, they would struggle once independent. Not only would it be hard to reenter the workforce if the couple split, but it may be hard to simply leave the relationship in the first place. If the woman is dependent on the man, has no home to turn to or money to use, she would be more likely to stay in an abusive relationship if she feels she has no other option.

Some also question if choosing domestic work without having children to raise is unproductive.

"I don't think the issue is really with feminism as much as it is with being a functioning member of society," said Stella Grable (11) "I believe that it's arbitrary to propose that you're adequately contributing to society by staying home and letting your boyfriend be the breadwinner." The disparity between the reception of stay-at-home mothers and stay-at-home girlfriends seems large. Mothers are rightfully praised for raising the next generation, but girlfriends are disregarded, their work seemingly not bettering the community in the way that mothers do.

Aside from criticisms, these stay-at-home girlfriends have had a mix of support. Some backing for this lifestyle has come from men who essentially think that these women are the ideal women and present the perfect view of subservience and submission to men. Responding to criticisms against stay-at-home girlfriends, YouTube commenter Abdou Lo said, "[now with] modern women... a woman can't be traditional and submit to their husband and a man can't have a wife that is submissive who wants to cook and clean for him," valuing subservience as the best trait a woman can have. Some of these girls have been used to set a standard for femininity and demonstrate what a women's role in society should be instead of just showing one lifestyle available for women.

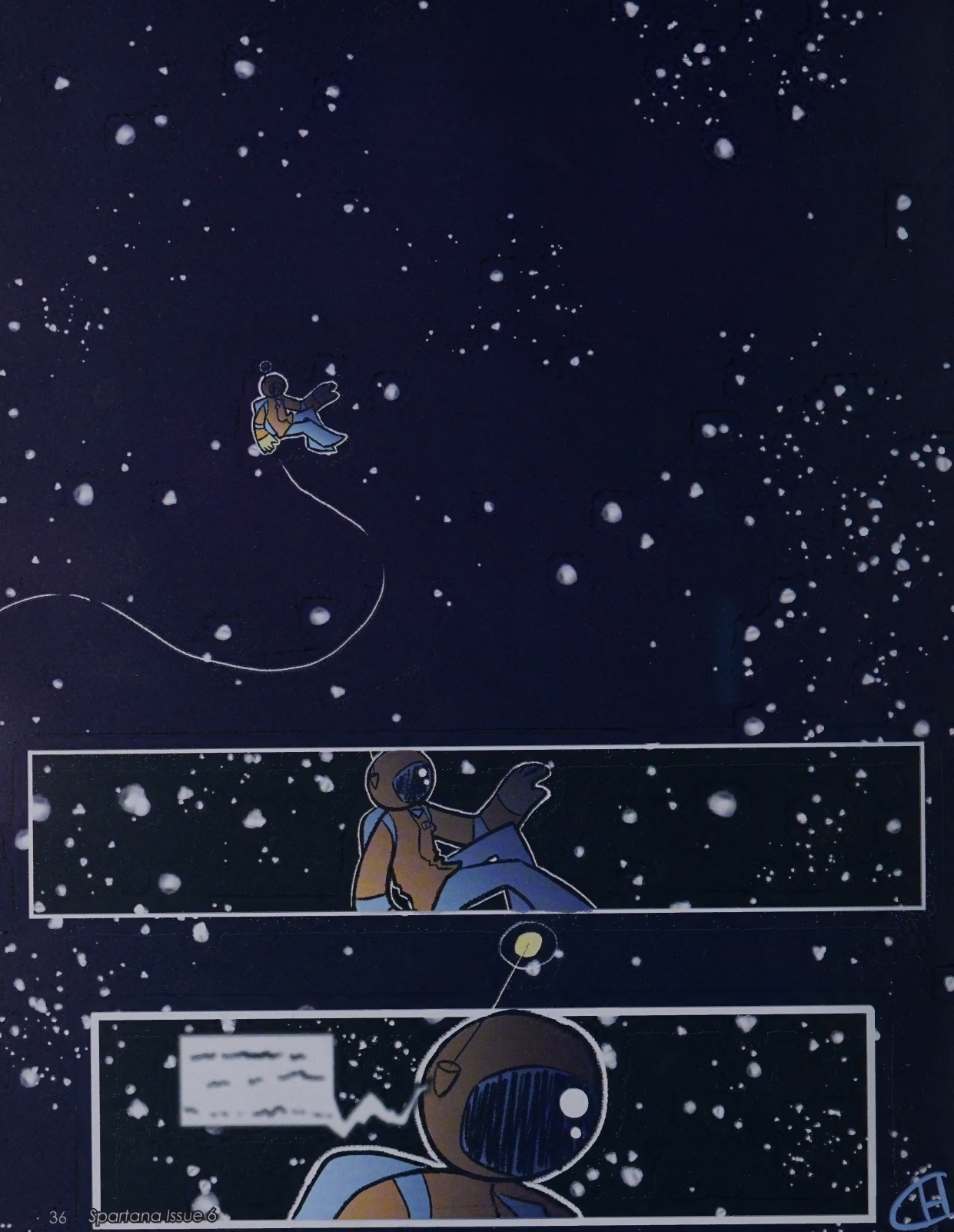
However, stay-at-home girlfriends have also received support from other women who aren't stay-at-home girlfriends. Some women say that to deny the idea that these women can live happy, worthwhile lives while being homemakers is to deny them of their autonomy. Some women also praise them for having desirable lives with comments like "you're really living my dream" and "the life I want."

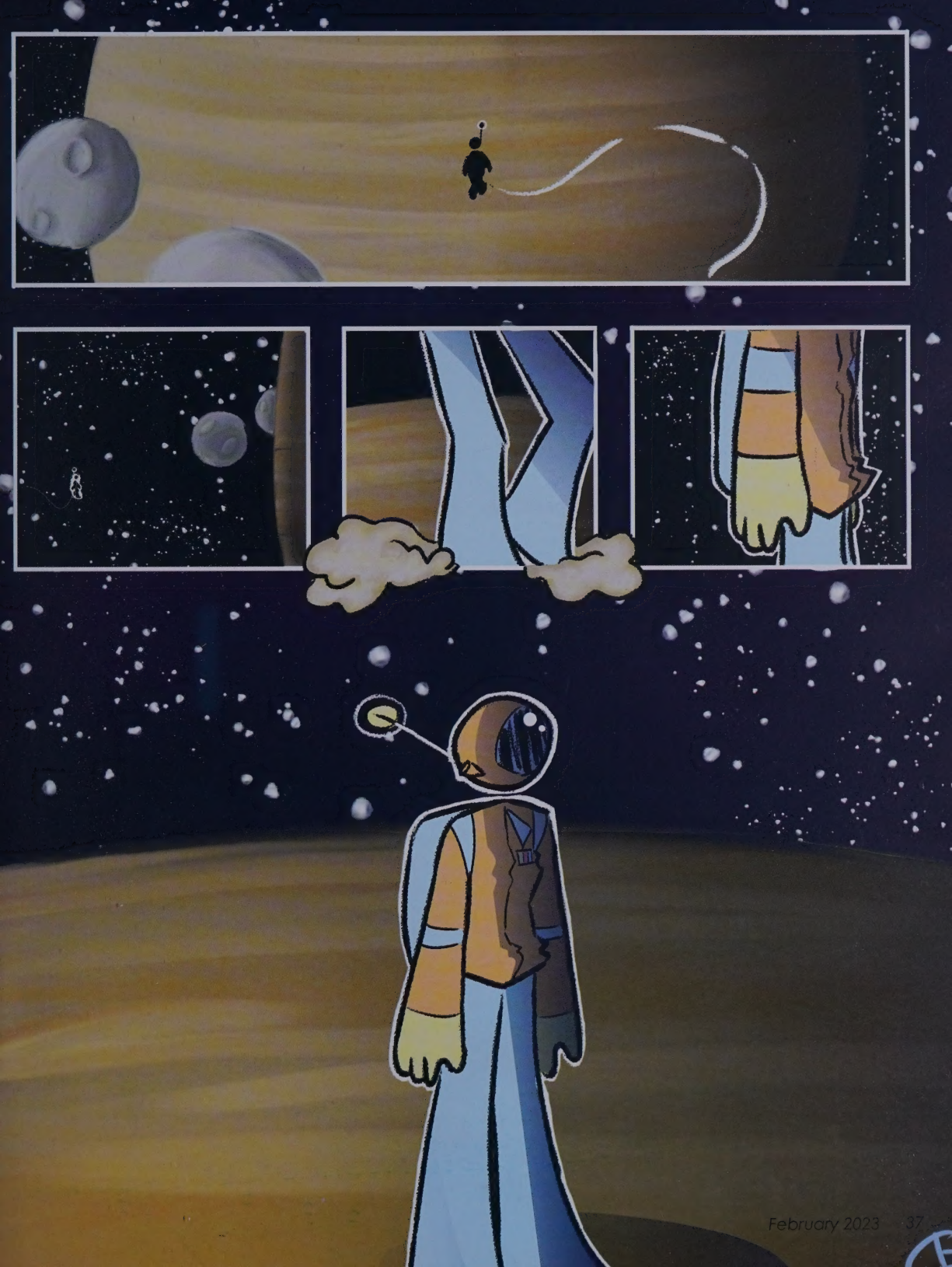
Erica McDowell, a self-proclaimed stay-at-home girlfriend said, "people think that I just stay at home all day, but [my boyfriend] works really hard, so in return it's only right for me to make sure that he doesn't have to worry about anything around the house and that is [a form of] manual labor."

If women chose to live less independently in exchange for financial security and more time to themselves, then they have the right to choose to do so. It goes along with the idea of choice feminism or that every decision made by a woman is inherently feminist if they chose it for themselves.

But, some feminist thinkers point to adaptive preferences to explain these women's life choices. Adaptive preferences are the life choices one makes in response to oppression, even if the person thinks they are choosing it independent from outside factors. For instance, these women may enter into a more subservient role because they were unconsciously conditioned to lean towards roles in the home rather than work force.

The overall response from stay-at-home girlfriends, may that be support or critiques, brings up the question of if the world should even care this much. Is the internet doing its part and questioning a potentially dangerous situation for women or should the world trust woman who say that they are happy?





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the Spartana

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PHOTO COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

Leditor

or, letter from the editors

Dear Reader,

March marks the beginning of spring, a sun- and shower-filled season of change that replaces those lingering winter days. Change has come to Homestead High School as well. In recent months, a Culture Night Committee, Community Outreach Committee and Young Women's Mentoring Committee were established with the leadership of Minority Student Union members. Near the library's entrance, the Inspiration Wall features prominent people of color in politics, history, media, sports and more.

These changes, which work to celebrate diversity and a culture of inclusion, were the result of students who spoke up and engaged Homestead administration in discussions on race, equity and belonging on Thursday, Feb. 9. As Southwest Allen County Schools Superintendent Dr. Park Ginder wrote in a Feb. 19 District Update, "intentional change takes time."

Our March issue aims to amplify these discussions, shining a spotlight on students, clubs, courses and artists that represent a range of perspectives and backgrounds. We take a look at Black history and culture in Fort Wayne and feature a series of articles written by African American students here at Homestead. Our issue also gives insight into the range of cultures and communities, including Burmese and Pakistani, found in Fort Wayne. In honor of Women's History Month, we commemorate the stories of 18th- and 19th-century female novelists, as well as the achievements of the Lady Spartans. Also in this issue, we invite you to learn about the Special Education Department, inclusive reading in English course curricula and the importance of "smashing" echo chambers.

Neither the March issue nor any other could happen without the dedication of 19 *Spartana* staff writers and designers. However, we know that a staff of fewer than 20 cannot cover all the topics important to a student population of more than 2,400. We welcome questions, comments, suggestions and—most of all—requests to guest write at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com.

Happy reading,
Madeline Phuong and Ganga Subramanian

COVER
designed by AZALEA ORSINI

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WE DEMAND

THE LADY SPARTANS RECAP

written and designed by
LUKE LAND

DID HOMESTEAD CONTINUE ITS DOMINANCE AFTER AYANNA PATTERSON'S GRADUATION?

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOURNEY BREWER

Death, taxes and the Lady Spartans being sectional champions. Those are the guarantees of life as the girls' basketball team has won their ninth sectional title in the past decade. How has Homestead continued its dominance?

"Our success over the years is directly related to the hard work, commitment and teamwork by the girls who play basketball at Homestead," said Head Coach Rod Parker.

Homestead has had its way around the area, so much so that they are expected to win almost every game they play, no matter the team they face. Because of this, some were disappointed when the ladies finished third in the Summit Athletic Conference (SAC) standings this year. This is the second time they haven't won the SAC since joining in the 2015-16 season.

Parker considers it a compliment for people to think that Homestead will win the conference every year. There's also pressure from previous teams to continue the success. He tells his girls to embrace the pressure, and it works to their advantage.

Some questioned how the Lady Spartans would bounce back with the graduation of Ayanna Patterson, now a freshman at the University of Connecticut. Those questions didn't come about with the team. Parker explained that he expected the girls to come out and compete every night.

Parker hit a career milestone this year, winning his 400th career game, but he cares more about the success of his players. Parker doesn't see it as an important landmark thing for his career, but rather as a reminder of the memories over the years.

Parker said his favorite moment this year "was seeing the smiles on each player's face after we won the sectional this year." For some of the players, it was celebrating coach Parker's 400th career win, including Myah Epps (9).

As a freshman, Epps stormed onto the Homestead scene. In the 2022-2023 season, Epps averaged 12.2 points per game, 3 assists per game and 4.6 rebounds per game. She worked her way to the starting lineup and took it with caution.

"It meant a lot to me… I just wanted to be able to fulfill that role," said Epps.

With the success she had this season, Epps was named to the All-SAC First Team, an award voted on by coaches in SAC to recognize the best players in the conference. The 13 players with the most votes are awarded the honor.

Epps values the title a lot. She has looked up to many players who made the team this year, so being grouped with some of her idols was very surreal. Epps was the only freshman to be given the award, but she doesn't like to think of it as that. She holds more value to her skill level than her grade.

Before the season, Epps received her first Division-I (D-I) scholarship offer to play basketball at Ball State University. It was important to Epps, who said "the fact that college coaches look at me and admire my talent is a really big deal for me."

Epps, with so much early success, has a lot of pressure to keep the trend going in the future. She doesn't let the pressure get to her by keeping occupied with where she wants to go in her future. She makes sure to keep her circle of friends small to limit distractions and knows that the people she has around her will help her achieve her goals.

For next season, Epps wants to get stronger and work on playing lower, which is a similar focus for her teammate, Ali Stephens (12).

Stephens is on the other end of where Epps will be in a few years. Stephens, who was a four-year varsity player for the Spartans, wants to focus on becoming stronger while working on her defense as she goes off to play D-I college basketball at the University of Nebraska Omaha.

Stephens signed with the Mavericks last year and said it was a relief to play basketball without having to worry about college.

Being a four-year varsity athlete, Stephens scored a lot in her career. This season, she joined the 1,000-point club. She is one of 15 Spartans to achieve the honor.

Stephens has had this as a goal since middle school, so accomplishing this feat was a satisfying moment for her. Stephens said that she feels like an underdog in the Class of 2023, so achieving this goal helped by putting some respect on her name.

After losing Patterson to graduation, Stephens stepped up as a leader. On the court, it was a rollercoaster ride, but in the locker room, it was natural to her. She had to learn to play down low despite being undersized and being relegated to the role of a shooting guard or a small forward her whole career. She had fun learning new skills and found it rewarding.

Over Stephens' varsity career, she got to make many new friendships, but none bigger than having her best friend, Molly Stock (12), play all four years in varsity with her.

Stock is most known for her shooting. Stock has always loved to shoot three-pointers, so becoming the main threat for this season was an easy role she jumped into.

When Homestead needed a three, they looked for Stock as one of those options. She had a lot more confidence this year compared to last, so she embraced those situations and hit many big shots during the season.

Sadly, Stock won't be playing basketball at the next level. It doesn't feel real to her yet. She will be constantly training and playing in travel tournaments over the summer, so when that's over, she thinks it'll hit her harder.

"It was definitely sad to realize that part of my life is over, but I am also able to realize how many positive and memorable experiences I have had in the past four years," said Stock.

Stock is going to miss bonding with her teammates and watching all of her hard work come into fruition.

Losing a four-year varsity player is going to be big, but Emma Ruest (11) seems up for the challenge.

Ruest is coming off her junior season, where she took on a much bigger role from last year. She had to step up this year on the court and help out with mentoring the underclassmen.

Ruest felt a lot more comfortable this year due to her parents, teammates and coaches helping her realize what she is capable of on the court. That helped her to receive her first All-SAC honor, which was huge for her.

"Receiving an All-SAC award is a huge accomplishment and it motivates players to get even better," said Reust. For next year, she wants to get stronger and improve her ball-handling skills.

Looking to the next season, Coach Parker wants everyone to grow individually. With five seniors graduating, everyone will need to step into new roles next year.

The team next year will be a young one, so Parker wants the girls' to focus on competing at a high level every game. But the players want more than that.

The girls want to win the SAC, something that didn't happen this year. They also want to get past regionals for the first time since the 2016-17 season. Some big tasks, but nothing that the Lady Spartans can't handle.

"People are always going to have expectations of you and are going to expect you to do things, but you kind of got to block it out and do what you do best," said Epps.

There are going to be doubts of what Homestead can accomplish next year, especially playing against teams like Snider and Carroll. Despite this, Homestead has a talented core and next year will continue the trend of what the team does best; winning.

CELEBRATING
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February was Black History Month, a time to celebrate the accomplishments of Black Americans. February was chosen to be Black History month because of abolitionist Frederick Douglass's and President Abraham Lincoln's birthdays. Since then, February has been used to focus on Black culture and achievements nationwide. Below are ways to support Black history, artists, performers and buisness owners, along with information about the new Homestead Inspiration Wall.

EMBASSY THEATRE

The Embassy Theatre has hosted many of the world's most famous African-American performers, including Louis Armstrong, Peg Leg Bates and Duke Ellington. In the upcoming months, a variety of musical acts will perform at the Embassy.

On March 8, Chloe Arnold's Syncopated Ladies hosted a show at 7:30 p.m. The Syncopated Ladies are a group of five young women who tap dance. Videos of the young women have gotten over 100 million views for their dancing. According to Arnold, their team's mission is to "bring tap dance to the world with a cutting-edge style, fierce footwork, and female force in order to amplify the voice of Black women through the language of tap dance."

Raheem DeVaughn, a Grammy-nominated R&B and neo-soul singer, also performed live at the Embassy on March 17, 8 p.m. Since 2005, his albums have consistently made the Top Ten R&B/hip-hop songs, and his songs "Customer" and "Woman" by DeVaughn have made the top 100. His unconventional take on rhythm and blues make his work stand out from other artists.

Additionally, Karlous Miller will be hosting a comedy show in the Embassy on Aug. 25, 2023. Miller is known for his appearance in *Wild 'N Out*, an MTV show, but has also gained popularity through his comedy shows on Hulu and in person. His show called *At the End of the Day...* is an easy way to have fun with family and friends.

DOWNTOWN MURALS

Some downtown murals are painted by Black artists, such as Woven by Lyndy Brazile on 222 Pearl Street. You can learn more about Brazile on page 14. The collaborative inclusivity project at Pearl street on the Jones Petrie Rafinski building downtown contains many more colorful murals. The mural *I Scream Fort Wayne* by Theoplis Smith III, also known as Phresh Laundry, depicts an ice cream cone with Fort Wayne's Congress house and a bulldog. Smith said he wanted to "pay homage to [Fort Wayne] and bring us together with bright colors." These beautiful paintings are located throughout the city and the best part? They are entirely free to look at. Visit Fort Wayne contains many tidbits about each artist and links to the websites where they sell their artwork.

RESTAURANTS AND FOOD

Supporting locally-owned Black restaurants is one of the yummiest ways to celebrate Black culture. Charlow's Grill is a family-run restaurant downtown that offers soul food Tuesday through Saturday. They serve collard greens with cornbread, okra, fish and chicken baskets and more. Charles Washington started this business from scratch and now has a steady clientele for his southern-themed food.

Elijah's Restaurant and Bakery is another Black-owned business. They offer lots of American favorites, like waffles or chicken tenders, made with natural ingredients. 24/7 karaoke and free coffee every day. Elijah's is open Tuesday through Saturday, and offers lots of breakfast-themed foods, along with other more classic options.

MUSEUM

The African American Historical Society Museum at 436 E. Douglas Avenue in Fort Wayne is a museum dedicated to African American contributions to the United States. The museum was founded in 1999 by Dr. John Aden to preserve African and African American culture. The museum offers tours of the house, which was created in 1890, that discusses local successes for African Americans in the past, along with native African items. In addition to having over 130 original African artworks, the museum also displays wooden statues, musical instruments, traditional weapons and items used in rituals and ceremonies.

LACK HISTORY

WAYNE

signed by
LAND

HOMESTEAD'S INSPIRATION WALL

Homestead's new Inspiration Wall puts a spotlight on influential minorities. Nicole Obioma (11) shared that the "posters are really just the beginning" of a larger project that looks to "remind Spartans about the impact minorities have had on society." Diversity projects, like this one, focus on developing figures that remind students they can make a difference. Furthermore, Mike Obioma (10) revealed that the wall really "serves as a precursor to the additions that the administration plans to implement."

The "artisticness of all the posters" was utilized to further elaborate on the Student Minority Club's theme of uniqueness, said senior Kenneth Austin. According to Obioma (11), the group purposely "use[d] different colors" to represent how "everyone who contributed to the wall had their own style." The varying colors visually illustrate the concept of variety in humans, and for the impressionable young minds of students, seeing individuals that look like themselves can be highly beneficial, influential and inspirational - which is the entire goal of the Inspiration Wall.

This wall is the beginning of a journey to develop students' cultural understanding. Austin (12) spoke about cultural competence, which "involves knowing your own cultural beliefs and values and being aware of how these may be different from other cultures," along with "being able to learn about and honor the different cultures of those you work with." According to the Education Information Resources Center, learning about different cultures breaks personal barriers, develops new skills and increases one's ability to empathize and sympathize with others.

A 2015 McKinsey report revealed how diverse representation in workspaces were correlated to an overall increase in success and a 35% increase in financial gain. More representation in Homestead could very likely see a similar effect on the success of students. Ah'taya Beard (11) hopes to add more "diversity to the curriculum" at our school and "believes the wall will pave a more colorful way for the young diverse minds at our school."

Austin (12) thinks that a "quick 20-25 seconds where an interesting fact is told about a random culture" could get some kids more interested in learning about different cultures. Beard thinks that more "inclusive clubs and committees" would improve diversity at Homestead. Plus, due to recent events at the school, Obioma (10) said that pre-existing minority clubs will be "strengthened and have more attending members."

The Inspiration Wall is a reminder to students that they can make a difference. Obioma (11) said that the wall "inspires me to be my best self, and it always makes me think: 'How can I make a change today?'"

Aretha Franklin
1942-2018

Aretha Franklin was a civil rights activist, pianist, singer, and songwriter. She is known as the "Queen of Soul," and is one of the world's best selling music artists with over 75 million records. Her soulful music inspired millions of people worldwide, and her hit song "Respect" became an anthem of the civil rights struggle and of the upcoming women's movement.

Marsha P. Johnson
1945-1992

Marsha P. Johnson was an AIDS and gay rights activist, and was also a prominent figure in the stonewall uprising of 1969. Johnson founded with Sylvia Rivera and other close friends the Gay Liberation Front and co-founded the Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries (STAR).

CÉSAR CHÀVEZ

FARMER LABOR UNION LEADER AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST
1927-1993

César Chàvez revealed the struggles of farm workers to the world by founding the National Farm Workers Association and organizing many peaceful protests and marches. He led farm workers in earning higher pay and far better working conditions throughout the United States during the 60s and 70s.

AP African American Studies

written and designed by
ISABELLA AMBROSE

Intro

College Board officially announced the introduction of a new Advanced Placement class: African American Studies. Up to this point, College Board has not had a class covering a fundamental part of American history. College Board began developing African American Studies over a decade ago. Since then, College Board has met with over 300 African American Studies professors and teachers from 200 colleges (including a multitude of historically Black colleges and universities) in order to create a curriculum that accurately maps out African American history in the United States.

60 schools nationwide are currently participating in the course's pilot program. Homestead was not selected to be a part of the pilot program this year. The 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years will be a trial run. Students that are currently enrolled in the course will take the AP test in May, but College Board will not give out scores or college credit until 2025. This way, colleges have time to create policies about transferring credits onto student transcripts.

If the pilot program runs smoothly, African American Studies may be offered at Homestead in the 2024-2025 school year. Steve Pickett, the head of the Social Studies department at Homestead, said that "AP College Board will provide guidance to schools that will help the schools determine what the prerequisites or grade level should be." Until then, Homestead students will not know who the class is available to.

Curriculum

College Board stated that African American Studies "focuses on key periods such as the American Revolution, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the rise and fall of Jim Crow segregation, and the civil rights movement." College Board also revealed that "the course provides students with a firm foundation of facts and evidence about this extraordinarily rich saga of American history." African American Studies examines the vital contributions and experiences of African Americans in a variety of fields, including art, history, literature, geography and science.

Unit One covers everything from the definition of African American Studies to Early West African Empires. Students will study maps of these early empires, artwork and various other primary sources relating to the course material. Unit Two covers the slave trade, as well as various uprisings and revolts. Unit Three begins the transition into the modern era; it covers the Jim Crow South, the Harlem Renaissance and other early 20th-century movements. Finally, Unit Four covers the Civil Rights Movement and Black feminism, among a variety of other Black movements.

Pushback

In recent years, there has been a national effort by both politicians and parents to have control over what content is taught in schools. Topics concerning race, US history, gender studies and LGBTQ+ studies have been at the forefront of this extensive criticism. Some feel that teaching these topics in school is a form of indoctrination. Conservative politicians specifically feel that the education system is being used to push a left-leaning political agenda upon students. On critcal race theory, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (R) said that Floridian politicians and parents "are taking a stand against the state-sanctioned racism that is critical race theory." Manny Diaz Jr. (R), Florida's education comissioner, added that "we do not accept woke indoctrination masquerading as education." Thus, state governments have or have tried to put laws into place that limit what can be taught in school. Educators that go against these acts may be fined or even fired, and the school may face cuts in national funding.

On Jan. 12, College Board received a letter from Florida Department of Education's Office of Articulation (FDOE) concerning the content of AP African American Studies. The letter stated that AP African American Studies "lacks educational value and is contrary to Florida law." Florida did offer College Board an opportunity to revise their curriculum: "In the future, should College Board be willing to come back to the table with lawful, historically accurate content, FDOE will always be willing to reopen the discussion." Currently, AP African American Studies is banned in Florida.

The Florida College System released the following statement in mid-January: "Our institutions will not fund or support any institutional practice, policy, or academic requirement that compels belief in critical

race theory or related concepts such as intersectionality, or the idea that systems of oppression should be the primary lens through which teaching and learning are analyzed and/or improved upon." Intersectionality was a key subject in the College Board's initial curriculum and was included in a chapter titled "Intersectionality and Activism."

Intersectionality is defined as the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class and gender as they apply to a given individual or group. To put it simply, intersectionality states that a Black woman would have a lower wage than a white man simply because she is both Black and a woman.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is defined as a set of ideas holding that racial bias is inherent in many parts of Western society, especially in its legal and social institutions, due to having been primarily designed for and implemented by white people. While CRT was rumored to be in the initial curriculum, it is not in the official curriculum.

The Florida education system argues that CRT and other modern movements influence a political agenda. Florida believes that these so-called political topics are indoctrinating students, and Florida stated that the education system should remain free of political sway. On the other side of the argument, some educators and parents say that studies covering Black history are not indoctrinating students, but rather teaching an important and necessary past. Illinois Governor JB Pritzker (D) stated that students "deserve the opportunity, alongside their classmates, to learn the honest and accurate history of the nation they now live in," in his letter to College Board.

Despite stating that it "has operated independently from political pressure," College Board has officially removed sections of the curriculum. College Board stated that "core revisions [to the curriculum] were substantially complete–including the removal of all secondary sources–by Dec. 22, 2022, weeks before Florida's objections were shared." College Board denied that the changes made to the preliminary curriculum were in response to political backlash. Dr. Kerry Haynie, a professor at Duke University and a member of the course's development committee spoke on the behalf of College Board: "We reject any claim that our work either indoctrinates students or, on the other hand, has bowed to political pressure."

In a letter shared by the FDOE dated Feb. 7, 2023, the FDOE outlined all correspondence with Florida since January 2022. During that time period, Florida continually expressed to College Board that AP African American Studies could not be taught in Florida schools unless the curriculum was permanently changed. In response, a total of 19 topics were removed from the course after back-and-forth between College Board and FDOE.

30 human rights and gender rights organizations accused College Board in a letter that "the meetings with Florida officials were about removing the depth, breadth, and recency of Black history in its study of Black life." These organizations demanded that David Coleman, CEO of College Board, resign because of the "public relations and brand disaster" that College Board has created. The 30 organizations stated that College Board has "caus[ed] pain, division, and turmoil for the community it sought to celebrate."

However, College Board did add a student project to the official curriculum. For this project, students may "pursue their own interests and choose their topic; they can return to areas they studied earlier in the course or address contemporary topics that are not part of the required course framework." College Board stated that these "contemporary issues" would receive "rapid, superficial coverage…at the end of the course." College Board reasoned that creating a student project that covers contemporary issues would allow a more in-depth study and exclude the company from more political backlash.

Conclusion

Education and politics will continue to have a shaky relationship. Until the nation decides on what content is acceptable to be taught in school and how much of our history we want to examine, the quarrel between education and politics will be an ongoing one.

To view official curriculum, scan this code

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT BLACKFACE

written and designed by
AZALEA ORSINI

There are many taboo items in society that most people are familiar with but nobody wants to talk about. Unfortunately, when something is kept in the dark, it's allowed to brew and become an issue. To remedy that, we have to talk about it. If you've ever seen an image of blackface, there's a good chance it made you extremely uncomfortable; a white person with painted black or brown skin, exaggerated red lips and torn-up clothes is, to say the least, a reprehensible sight. It's time to address blackface's history and how it affects modern culture.

Blackface, like much of America's disturbing racial history, has its roots in slavery. The first blackface performances, also known as minstrel shows, appeared in the 1830s. They were often performed by New Yorkers who covered their skin with tar, grease paint, shoe polish or cork ash and wore ragged, worn-out clothing to imitate slaves on southern plantations. The characters that these people played were usually stupid, lazy, sexually immoral and incompetent. Jim Crow, one of these early minstrel characters, was portrayed as barbaric, giving white politicians and slave owners a pretext for their treatment of Black people. Another popular minstrel character, the "mammy," bolstered the erroneous idea that slaves were happy to care for white people. The American writer Frederick Douglass, a former slave and prominent figure in the abolitionist movement, said that blackface performers were "the filthy scum of white society" after watching a performance in 1848.

Unfortunately, the trend of blackface didn't die out with slavery. During Reconstruction, blackface grew in popularity across the nation, validating racist stereotypes. Eventually, white southern lawmakers immortalized the ideology behind blackface in "Jim Crow" legislation. Jim Crow laws, which were in effect from 1870 to 1980, institutionalized segregation and deprived Black families and communities of their wealth. These laws were unofficially tied to the name "Jim Crow" to serve as a reminder of the negative stereotypes that blackface portrayed. At the turn of the 20th century, there was no sign of the racist practice stopping. Blackface was also used in the early 20th-century film industry, even—ironically—in works like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1903). Performers were raking in money from these minstrel shows, and audiences were still roaring with laughter. Once the early Civil Rights Movement started to emerge, blackface slowly lost public support. By the 1940s, interest in minstrel shows had died down, and by the 1960s, contemporary distaste for the practice was the popular position.

After all of that history, however, some individuals in the modern era have still decided the practice doesn't carry that much historical significance, using it as a tool for comedy. Notable celebrities

and comedians such as Jimmy Fallon and Jimmy Kimmel have done skits using blackface, and during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, many shows such as "The Office," "The Golden Girls," "Saturday Night Live" and "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia" removed episodes that featured characters in blackface. Fallon eventually apologized in 2020 (19 years after the incident) for his "terrible decision" to do blackface, calling it "unquestionably offensive." Others like Jimmy Kimmel doubled down, saying criticism of his past blackface skits was used to "diminish [his] criticisms of social and other injustices."

The practice of blackface for entertainment isn't a uniquely American issue. Each November in the Netherlands, Sinterklaas—the Dutch Santa Claus—begins a three-week holiday celebration. In most cases, Sinterklaas brings along a helper called "Zwarte Piet"—Black Pete. The character is portrayed quite problematically. Typically, Piet is a white man with painted brown or black skin, a black curly wig and overlined red lips. British shows have been removed from streaming services due to their use of blackface, and British comedians have generally been much less willing to concede to the criticisms.

As the Journal of Applied Sociology wrote, "It is important to gauge accurately the level and nature of prejudice and stereotyping of African-Americans in contemporary society if one is to intervene effectively in these areas." This should be common sense, but it's important to remember that no matter how inconsequential modern blackface seems out of context, there's no way to untie the history that tarnishes our nation. Jokes are never 'just jokes'; there's always meaning behind them, and their use can cause genuine harm to those who are treated as the target. Understanding the context that defines modern culture is critical for becoming a more respectful, empathetic and kind person.

"WE DECLARE OUR RIGHT ON THIS EARTH... TO BE A HUMAN BEING, TO BE RESPECTED AS A HUMAN BEING, TO BE GIVEN THE RIGHTS OF A HUMAN BEING IN THIS SOCIETY."

- MALCOM X

Affinity Clubs

designed by Ganga Subramanian

Minority Student Union

Homestead's Minority Student Union (MSU) is a club where students come together to chat, socialize and connect to others and their diverse cultures. As co-founders Ah'Taya Beard (11) and Dior Hatch (11) have said, it is a safe space for all voices to be heard at Homestead. Spanish teacher Ellen Robinson is the sponsor for MSU and her role is to "moderate student meetings and help the co-founders as they navigate and plan events." Dr. Robinson sponsors MSU so she can best help students understand cultural differences and make connections to their own backgrounds.

Paolo Rosales (11) chimed in on what his experience was like at MSU: "I first decided to join Minority Student Union because of recent political heat and personal issues which prompted me to want to be in a safe space where I could express myself, which is something scarce at Homestead." Rosales believes that MSU is an important club at Homestead because it acts as a safe place for students, as "the majority of the school does not understand how comforting it is for us to have a space that is all-inclusive and where each and every voice is heard." The Minority Student Union has meetings every other Friday from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m. in room 611.

written by MORGAN CONN

Asian Alliance

The Asian Alliance Club is a Homestead extracurricular activity founded a few years ago. The club is sponsored by English teacher Erin Whitt and meets every other Tuesday in room 119. The purpose of the group is to bring people of the same background together to cultivate relationships and discuss heavy topics. According to Nichelle Lin (10), "It helps to make Asian minorities feel more welcomed and feel like they have a place somewhere in Homestead." Sienna Phongkhammeung (11) said that "the purpose of the club is to spread our holidays, traditions, and foods."

Aside from being a safe space for Asian Americans, the association prides itself on covering real-world issues when necessary. For example, the club is currently watching a movie called "Minari," which covers the racial issues Asian immigrants face when moving to America. Recently, discrimination has become the main focus of the group.

However, despite the heavy topics, the Asian Alliance Club can still be a fun place to hang out and meet new people. Yeyoon Song (12) said that one of the best parts of the club is getting to "learn about different Asian cultures that students get to lead/present to other members."

written by SAIF IBRAHIM

GSA

written by KAITLYN FRY

The wide variety of gender/sexuality identities at Homestead are acknowledged and discussed at Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) meetings. GSA is a club at Homestead where people, whether in the LGBTQIA+ community or not, can gather to meet others that have had similar experiences. English teacher Scott Hill is the sponsor of the club. GSA currently meets in the media center. GSA was originally a student's idea to create a safe space for LGBTQIA+ students free of discrimination and judgment. Hill says, the student, Leah Valentine, was not in the LGBTQIA+ community; she wanted it to happen so she did it.

GSA participates in various activities; there is hot chocolate and tea in the back corner, card games, music and conversations about different experiences. Moss Nunn (12) claimed that "[they]'ve also had group discussions of [their] own experiences and have shared [their] stories as people of the LGBTQ community. Not all of the stories have been positive though." Nunn also mentioned that "[they]'ve had guest speakers in the past that are of the community." One of these guest speakers was Homestead graduate Ollie Chaulk, who talked about their experience transitioning. Hill sayidanother guest speaker that GSA has had was "Patty Meriweather, with Fort Wayne PFLAG, a support group for LGBTQ+ families." The GSA is always looking for more people to join.

LATINOS UNIDOS

written by MYIA HAMED

Whether it be wanting to learn more about Hispanic culture or Latino affairs, Latinos Unidos is a club for everyone. It is an all-inclusive club so anyone is eligible to join at any time during the year.

Elizabeth Cornelio (11) explains that the "main goal is to unite many students together and make sure they feel welcome [at Homestead]." Everything from the family dinner night to the games that Cornelio enjoys, including "playing Loteria and Dominos" reveals that Latinos Unidos is all about incorporating Latino culture into club activities at Homestead.

The club also brings the Latino Community together. Arantza Avila (12) expresses how the goal is "to share and learn about the differences and similarities between the Latino communities." She describes how she "moved to the United States 3 years ago without any knowledge of what to expect." Avila is thankful for Latinos Unidos because it provides a safe environment to get accustomed to both American and Latino cultures. Avila thinks that "being surrounded by people with similar experiences and backgrounds" is comforting.

If it is just to get a more diverse perspective or find your place in a loving Latino Community, come to the next Latinos Unidos meeting! They meet after school in room 610, Mrs. Bailey's room, for snacks, chats, and games once a month! See you there!

ERIN PATTON-McFARREN (she/her)

@epattonmcfarren

erinpattonmcfarren.com

Erin Patton-McFarren is a teacher, mother and artist who creates a unique type of art: cyanotypes. She uses the original chemistry from 1846 to create a formula that is painted on watercolor paper. This paper is allowed to dry in a dark room and is transported in a dark container to a body of water because the process begins as soon as the formula is exposed to sunlight. This procedure creates her cyanotypes which take inspiration from the composition of Edgar Degas' art as well as feminist art and abstract impressionism. There is also a hint of performative art as the act of creating the cyanotypes is, in and of itself, a performance.

The art really captures the exact moment in time that Patton-McFarren chooses, considering how quickly the process works. Her art has seen everything from the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean to New Orleans, La. and Boulder, Colo. She originally pursued this type of art after having her two children. Although she was previously interested in welding and using resin, as a mother of young kids, she wanted to adopt a less toxic and more child-friendly art form. "I knew that art would always be there for me and my kids wouldn't," said Patton-McFarren. She stumbled upon her love for cyanotypes on accident whilst doing an art project with her class.

Cyanotypes go beyond an interesting process for her; she sees them as a form of meditation. "It's something that's very much needed—it's just a part of me." Her process marks time and space, which she views as an extension of grieving. The act of finding the right spot and then spending time by the water is therapeutic and leaves her with a sense of calm afterward. She especially enjoys that this calming sensation is transferred through her art to the viewer, specifically through the pleasing blue tones.

Although she has sold her art through galleries before, she deeply enjoys the connection that comes from selling to collectors. With selling to collectors comes seeing a more intimate part of someone else's life: where the art will be hung in their house and what drew them to the style or specific piece in the first place.

In terms of selling through galleries, she understands their importance but dislikes the gatekeeping that accompanies them: "you have someone saying 'this is valid so this is all that will be seen'. What I value is other people's stories, other people's input and experiences." Overall, she believes that the value of art lies not solely in the end result, but also in the process used to make it. Allowing others to interpret art as well as to create their own provides everyone with the ability to share their own experiences, hence why diversity in the art world is so important.

Images courtesy of Erin Patton-McFarren

SPARTAN SPOTLIGHT:
FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENT

written and designed by
HANNAH SHAW

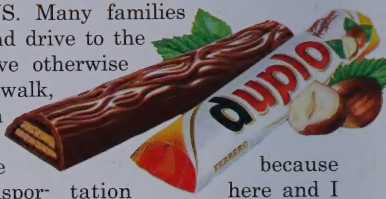
Marika Busch is from Berlin and has been living with a host family and going to Homestead for the past two semesters.

Although it was her parent's idea for her to do an exchange year in the United States, she also said that the US is probably the most popular country to do an exchange year in. After they suggested the idea she watched

Image courtesy of The German Way

TikTok videos from other exchange students and talked about the experience with her friends who had been through it before making the decision. Furthermore, how the US is portrayed on social media and in movies or TV shows makes it an enticing trip. "Because of all the high school movies, there were a lot of expectations. I also wanted to go to prom and stuff like that because we don't usually have that in Germany," said Busch.

The biggest difference Busch has experienced is that public transportation in Fort Wayne is far less common than in Germany, a difference she has not particularly enjoyed. In Germany, she would have free transportation because she is a student, a luxury she misses in the US. Many families here have two cars and drive to the store, which may have otherwise been only a five-minute walk, something nobody in Germany would do. "I miss my independence because there is no public transportation here and I always need someone to drive me," said Busch.



There are other cultural differences she says are different. For example, her host family is stricter about dating and boys. "My family in Germany never had a problem with things like that." Despite these differences, she admits that Germany and the US are not that different considering the two have both been westernized.

Image courtesy of timeout.com

Aside from easily accessible transportation, she also misses German food and family. She prefers German food and sweets, especially her mother's cooking, although she has been able to cook a bit for herself over the past few semesters. She misses her family and friends the most around important times of the year, like holidays and birthdays.

If she could leave everyone reading with one message, it would be that conflating Nazis and Germans is entirely incorrect, despite the American narrative that assumes otherwise. "We actually don't have a lot of people believing in the Nazi regime anymore but I feel like American people think that of us."

Images courtesy of pngimg.com & Svila Tradi

Despite India's breaking away from Britain in 1857, the conflict between Muslims and Hindus prevailed for nearly a century. After several wars and conflicts, Pakistan was eventually founded in 1947. However, India's influence would never stop pouring into Pakistan, and it is for that reason that the two countries are often grouped together, despite the incredible differences in values and cultures.

Pakistan's main religion is Islam, which is a monotheistic religion built upon what are called the Five Pillars of Islam. Each of these pillars have been integrated into Pakistan's culture. For example, the call for prayer can be heard five times a day, mosques are located in almost every neighborhood and almost all restaurants and cafes are closed throughout the day during Ramadan.

There are several staples to Pakistani cuisine such as biryani or pulao. Pulao is a one-pot dish of spiced rice, vegetables and animal protein. It is served steaming and fresh with a side of raitha (yogurt sauce). Biryani is another flavor packed dish that utilizes meat, vegetables and rice. Unlike pulao, the components are cooked separately before being layered in a pot and steamed until fully cooked. The main drink in Pakistan is chai, which is black tea leaves boiled in milk with nutmeg and sugar. Seeing as alcohol is forbidden, chai is a replacement that tastes just as good without the negative side effects. A well-known dessert is falooda, which is a layered milkshake made with ice cream, vermicelli, chia seeds, jelly and rose water.

Moving onto clothing, men and women typically wear the same thing: a kameez and a shalwar. The kameez is a knee-length shirt and the shalwar is linen pants. Men's clothing tends to be of neutral clothing such as white, gray or black. However, women's clothing tends to be more colorful and have elaborate embroidery and other embellishments. Another addition to the women's wardrobe would be their shawls draped over the upper half of their torsos, which are worn mainly for modesty.

One particularly significant tradition in Pakistani culture is Chaand Raat, which, translated from Urdu, means Moon Night. This night occurs the day before Eid-al-Fitr, which is the celebration of the end of Ramadan. Chaand Raat is celebrated on the same evening on which the first lunar crescent is viewed, which marks the end of Ramadan. Families head out to local stores and parlors purchasing gifts and clothing to prepare themselves for the next day of celebrations.

written by SAIF IBRAHIM

PAKISTANI CULTURE

CULTURE SPOTLIGHT:
PAKISTANI & GERMAN

designed by Madeline Phuong & Ganga Subramanian

GERMAN CULTURE

written by GAVIN LETON

Throughout the history of America, Germans often played a large role and were often present in America. Many Germans helped found cities in America such as Jamestown and modern day New York.

In the early years of American colonization, Germans mostly migrated for religious freedoms that were offered in America. Economic opportunities also were an incentive for Germans to leave Germany and come to America. America's reputation for being a place of freedom and great opportunities led to many Germans leaving the German states and coming to America.

The German population first began to settle regions of Pennsylvania and then began to settle into New York and Ohio. Soon, the German population moved into the Midwest and began settling along the Mississippi, Ohio and Missouri rivers while others went further into Texas, the Dakotas and even as far as the Pacific coast. By the 1910s, Germans made up a large portion of America and American culture with around eight million people in America being of a German nationality and origin. There were also many businesses, streets and towns given German names as well as German being taught in many schools across America at this time.

However, this would not last after 1917. Once America joined the Entente powers against Germany, a wave of anti-German sentiment spread across the United States with many in the U.S. government also pushing against German-American culture, including Woodrow Wilson. The U.S. government as well as private institutions began to push anti-German propaganda with nicknames such as the "Hun" and the "hyphenated American," claiming that these types of people were threats to America an American culture.

This anti-German sentiment led to many German businesses, towns, streets and German Americans changing their names to more Anglicized names to sound more American and patriotic and to avoid being targeted. Despite this, German institutions were still targeted for being German as well as a few of incidents of lynching against Germans. Schools also put a halt on the teaching of German, as many students in colleges and universities decided to stop learning German, dropping the amount of students learning German from 25% to 1%.

After World War I ended, anti-German sentiment cooled off though it did return during World War II to a less extreme extent. Despite this cooling off of anti-German sentiment, German culture in America never recovered to its pre-WWI stance, with the majority of German Americans no longer having anything in common with Germany or the German culture. Although German culture is no longer very prevalent in America, it still exists in a few areas such as in names or celebrations.

Whats Up With The Egg Prices?

written and designed by
KAIYA CRONKHITE & KATELYN STYBORSKI

Those who frequent the grocery store for essentials like milk, bread and eggs have noticed a sharp increase in prices and demand for eggs. Many have been wondering why the inflation is occurring, seemingly without cause, and, and what is being done to help get eggs back to the "regular prices." CNBC, Forbes, PBS, NPR and many other mainstream news stations claim that Avian, or bird, flu cases are the main culprit of egg storage. However, sources such as The Food Service FootPrint, are pushing cases suggesting that plastic waste in chicken feed is causing reduced production of market-worthy eggs. The spike from $1.93 for a dozen eggs in January 2022 to a whopping $4.82 one year later has sparked a price-gouging investigation, but sources hold firm that the main reason is the bird flu (The Hill).

The true loss the industry has suffered has not been fully calculated yet, as this is still an ongoing problem. Unlike the last bird flu outbreak in 2015, The Hill claims this situation has not proven as costly due to "the government and industry appl[ying] lessons learned eight years ago." The Hill also cites the USDA has estimated a billion-dollar loss in the industry due to the 58 million birds that were "slaughtered to limit the spread of the virus" in more than "300 commercial farms in 47 states." In 2015, the reaction was slightly smaller, with only 50 million birds killed on 200 farms in 15 states.

Even more horrifying are the rumors that commercial chickens are being fed plastic in their feed. The FDA states that animal feed is exempt from section 403 of the guidelines.This means that animal feed in the United States is exempt from laws regarding the specific ingredients and labeling requirements of what exactly goes into animal feed. As long as the feed is classified as "animal feed," there are virtually no limits on what could be found in it.

In the UK, a pig farmer by the name of Andrew Rock contacted a local news source after noticing shreds of plastic in his pig's feed. The Guardian claims Rock found pieces of plastic in every scoop of animal feed he inspected. Legally, in the UK, "a limit of 0.15% of plastic is allowed by the Food Standards Agency," according to The Guardian. "The official EU level for plastic permitted in animal feed is zero although, in reality, many other countries operate within the same 0.15% limit." While these findings were in the UK, it is still disturbing to find that a limited amount of plastic waste is legally packed into animal feed and is determined to be safe for animals to consume. There is still more research to be done on how animals ingesting plastic affects the long-term health of people who consume those animal products; however, most would not choose to eat meat from animals that had been reared on plastic waste.

Similarly, the plastic residue has been located in chicken eggs around the world. In 14 different countries, eggs collected near "plastic waste disposal sites" have been found to contain shocking levels of plastic in them, according to an article by The Food Service Footprint. The 14 countries include Belarus, Cameroon, the Czech Republic, Gabon, Ghana, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mexico, Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand and Uruguay. In the article, researchers concluded that the levels of "dioxin and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)" in the eggs tested near these sites "were so high that residents could not eat a single egg without exceeding the safe limits for these chemicals established in the EU." Once again, these studies do not account for the eggs in the US, but they do provide an interesting look into the egg industry.

Jindrich Petrlik, a director at Czech nonprofit Arnika, claimed that "dioxins and other POPs remain in the soil for decades or even centuries, creating a reservoir of highly toxic contaminants that poison the food chain." If Petrlik's warnings are to be heeded, then there may be some added unease to the eggs collected in any country—especially if those farms are located near any large reservoirs of plastic waste. That being said, there has been little to no testing on the dangers of plastic in the eggs collected and sold locally in the United States.

Despite the many rumors and intense speculation, egg farmers across the country continue to deny that there is a "broader conspiracy" AP News states. Brooke Dillon, an employee and "spokesperson for Land O'Lakes, the parent company of Purina Animal Nutrition" told sources, "We confirm there have not been formulation changes to Purina poultry feed products." Furthermore, Austin Therrell "executive director of the Association of American Feed Control Officials," a group of agencies that regulate animal feeds, made a statement regarding the effect animal feed has had on current egg prices. He claimed, "Our members have not really heard any exact reports of any correlation between the feed and egg production."

The official reason for the sudden increase in egg prices has been assigned to the current bird flu. No other theories have been proven to be the cause of the egg shortage, despite the massive surge of conspiracies, rumors, and speculation surrounding the issue.

Senior Quotes

written and designed by
Gaia Splendore

Looking through last year's yearbook, you may have noticed a lack of an iconic feature of high school yearbooks—senior quotes. Senior quotes are optional little blurbs that upperclassmen feature in the yearbook as a form of self expression. Occasionally, they fall into the cliches of referencing an episode of "The Office" or cleverly using the alphabetized nature of yearbooks to carry out a cross-student joke, and are considered a classic element of high school.

Senior quotes were removed because of the burden that it places on the administration, which has to filter hundreds of quotes in order to ensure a school-appropriate yearbook. However, their return has been officially approved and confirmed to return in Homestead's 2022-23 Yearkbook. This change could not have been made without the advocacy from some seniors at Homestead pushing for their comeback.

One senior in particular, Yearbook Editor Catherine Ahlersmeyer (12), has been using her influence on the yearbook committee to encourage the revival of senior quotes. She hopes that appropriate quotes, or quotes that reference or include NSFW content, can still be included.

"There is no better way to describe or sum up a student body or their individual experiences than allowing them to pick one or two sentences that relate to them and give others a sense of who they are at this moment in time," said Ahlersmeyer.

"I know that reviewing dozens of different entries takes a ton of time. I do it on the daily for the yearbook, so I'm entirely sympathetic for any hesitations the administration might be having," said Alhersmeyer. "This year you can also submit a song title and artist as your senior quote," a new idea designed to increase participation for those who just want to demonstrate their love for a certain song.

With the project officially greenlit, seniors, make sure to fill out the Google Form that Alhersmeyer sent out via email by the time everyone gets back from Spring Break (April 7th). This form allows you to pick your quote!

"I think senior quotes are cool and they make it more fun to look back on yearbooks," said Renee Peterson (12), a senior encouraging their return.

Seniors, check your email for the form to pick your quote!

BLACK STUDENT VOICES

designed by Ganga Subramanian

Dr. E. Sharon Banks
First female superintendent of a school district in Lansing, Michigan, and served many years as a leading educator in Fort Wayne Community Schools.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CROSSING OPPORTUNITY'S THRESHOLD

On stereotypes...

written by DA'RIAH HARVEY

Stereotyping is a widely held view or idea of a particular type of person or thing. Stereotyping does not have a positive connotation since it is usually considered as people's damaging views since it can cause harm and hurt feelings. Stereotyping in America is especially damaging to people of color. It has been around throughout history, dating back to the 1800s. And even after the end of slavery and segregation, some people's views have not changed. Not all, but some still view people of color to be dumb or lower. During slavery, white people had the right to education and gained many years of more education than African Americans. African Americans were denied their right to do anything, even learn, but they were still called dumb and laughed at.

Throughout the years, African Americans have gained basic civil rights: their freedom, to vote, education, citizenship, etc. The African American fight has been admirable. There are many African Americans who have gained success because of their education. For example, Barack Obama was elected as the 44th president, Oprah Winfrey runs many businesses and her own show called the Oprah Winfrey Network and Serena Williams is considered one of the best female tennis players in the world. Even though stereotyping is hurtful, African Americans are not letting prejudice stop them from accomplishing great things.

On Black History Month...

written by ANYLA SHAFER

"Why do you get a whole month?" is a question I have heard time and time again. I think this is a common question that many people who aren't part of the community might ask. Members of all communities should always be recognized for their accomplishments, but recognition is especially needed for our community. People such as Albery Murray changed the way people talk about race. Bayard Rustin, who organized the 1963 March on Washington. Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander paved the way for black women lawyers and many other people. Black History Month highlights the importance of recognizing people and events encompassed by the African Diaspora. We don't always get the recognition we need in schools, the workplace, the media and other social circles. So, this month is important because it gives us the recognition we need that we don't always receive. I think it is good for students to ask questions about Black History Month but the ignorant comment "Why do you get a whole month?" is unnecessary. Black History Month is a time of celebration and recognition for the African American culture and it is something we have fought for and deserve.

The Fort Wayne Colored Giants
The only Black baseball team to represent Fort Wayne for 42 years. One of the few teams from the 1900s to be memorialized in the 21st century via a plaque at Parkview Field.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WANE15

On terminology...

written by SANIYAH THOMAS

Most of society today does not know the differences between the terms African Americans and Black when it comes to referring to the African diaspora. There is in fact a huge difference. The connotation of the color black is the opposite of white, as it is used to refer to things that are dark, dirty, horrible, sinful, monstrous, etc. On the other hand, the color white is considered to be fresh, clean, pure, peaceful, etc. Using the word black as a classification of people implies that we are looked at as wrong or bad people, and that term has now been passed down to modern-day society and used so effortlessly in everyday conversation. We should not have to be so comfortable with being disrespected or even thinking that this is normal.

African American is the proper way to describe ourselves. Some of our ancestors are in fact African and originated in Africa but were captured and brought to the Americas, so we should be called African American. For example, Native Americans are Native Americans because they were in the Americas before Europeans colonized the American continent. African American society is suffering from racial insults on a daily basis, but it gets swept under the rug because they believe that our voices are not important enough to get simple topics, including this across.

We are not "Black People." We are all Americans and we as people deserve to be called not just African American, but American as well. Not as a classified group of people. This message should be spread around the whole world, especially for surveys, questionnaires and forms that request students' races. These forms should not say, Black, White, Mexican and so on and so forth. They should list the proper races such as European, African American, Latina, Latino, etc. Society should get into this habit and change our vocabulary from these hurtful names that are used so easily or looked at as not harmful. At the end of the day, everyone should be held to the same standard because we are all Americans, and no one should be treated below any other person at any moment.

John Nuckols
First African American to serve on Fort Wayne's City Council. He served for 23 years. Nuckols Park houses a statue of him which stands as a memorial to his service.

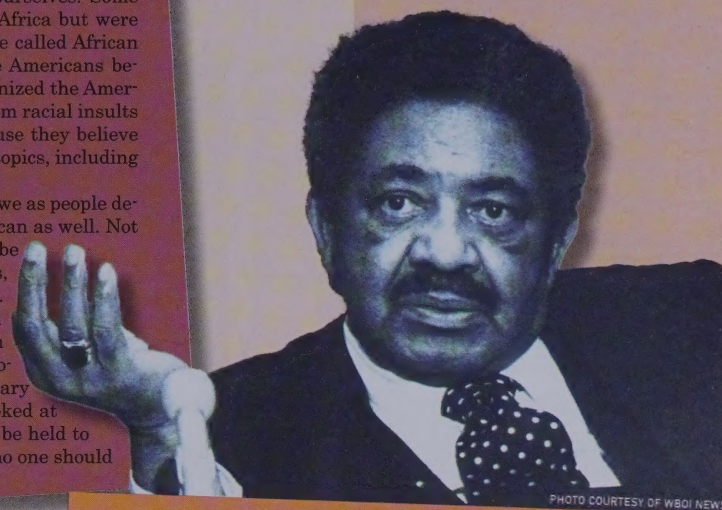


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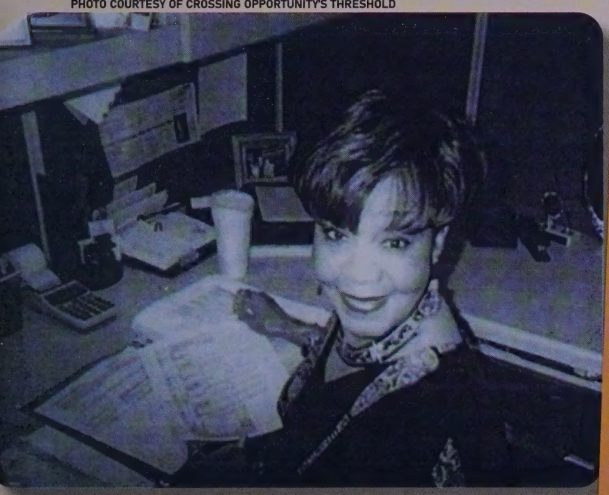
PHOTO COURTESY OF CROSSING OPPORTUNITY'S THRESHOLD



Fran Grant
Fort Wayne's first African American television personality. She worked at WPTA TV, then, she hosted the Fran Walker show, and finally WCMH TV 4 in Columbus, Ohio.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FORT WAYNE'S AFRICAN/AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS & TRAILBLAZERS, CHECK OUT ACPL'S GENEALOGY CENTER'S MARSHA SMILEY COLLECTION: CROSSING OPPORTUNITY'S THRESHOLD: HTTPS://WWW.GENEALOGYCENTER.INFO/SEARCH_OPPORTUNITY.PHP

On changes to Homestead...

written by MIKE OBIOMA

After meeting with the administration and other students on Feb. 9, many students came up with numerous suggestions to combat issues within Homestead that relate to discrimination and a lack of diversity. Many of us proposed ideas for changes that should be implemented by the administration. There were multiple suggestions for more events in the school in the same vein as "A Taste of Homestead" that showcases different aspects of cultures beyond food. One common criticism made by students that day was that the majority of students within the school are rarely exposed to cultures outside of their own and that there need to be more ways to integrate cultural diversity into some aspects of the school. The more aware students are of things that are outside of their cultural norms, the less judgemental and more accepting they will be toward them. Luckily for these students, the administration has confirmed that they are focused on creating new events that will showcase cultural diversity in its many forms.

Another common suggestion was to feature more outward expressions of displays and art of minorities and minority students throughout the school. Normalizing the faces and artistic expressions of minority leaders and students allows them to be more understood on a wider scale. People in minority groups are still somehow mocked for aspects of their appearances that may not be seen as Eurocentric, but if more diverse people are represented throughout the school through posters, art and other forms of media, students hope it will lead to the wider acceptance and appreciation of diverse features. Most of the ideas proposed by students center around the idea of bringing disconnected groups of people together in order to bridge the gap in the pursuit of unity. We cannot work together and understand each other if we do not start by seeing each other for who we are, rather than viewing others with our preconceived notions and stereotypes of each other.

DIVERSITY LAW DAY

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

"We are our ancestors' wildest dreams," declared Marsha Jean-Baptiste, President of the Black Law Student Association at the Indiana University (IU) Maurer School of Law, during Diversity Law Day on Feb. 4, 2023. In the audience, 20 Homestead High School students listened eagerly and asked questions of current IU law students.

Over the course of the full-day program, Homestead students also heard from Dean Christiana Ochoa and Assistant Dean of Admissions Greg Canada; participated in a mock class examining the court case, *Lassiter v. Northampton County Bd. of Elections*, with Professor Luis Fuentes-Rohwer; and learned from alumni who are currently practicing law. After the program, IU law students took the attendees on a tour of Baier Hall. Attendees discussed everything from the typical course load of a law student to the importance of diverse representation in the legal field.

Diversity Law Day began in the early 2000s as

PHOTOS & GRAPHICS COURTESY OF MADELINE PHUONG
BACKGROUND TEXTURE COURTESY OF ADOBE STOCK

Minority Law Day at the IU Maurer School of Law. Since then, more than 170 high school and college students have attended the event, both in-person and online—the option to attend via Zoom was added in 2021 to increase event accessibility.

"We changed the name to ensure we were being inclusive of the many different types of diversity that we wanted to serve[,] from racial and ethnic, but also to gender identity, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status," Associate Director of Admissions and Diversity Law Day organizer Josie Brush said.

The ultimate goal of the program is to promote inclusivity and diverse perspectives in the legal profession. To achieve this end, Brush reached out to Homestead, which has a Dual Credit partnership with IU for courses in government, history and calculus. From there, Homestead selected juniors and seniors "with a strong academic record" to attend the pipeline program at the invitation of the law school, with a focus on providing career opportunities to "underrepresented and underserved communities."

Brush asserted, "Even if I change one students' [sic] mind and now they are thinking, 'I can do this,' that's really what it is all about."

The program "made me consider law more," remarked Carolina Rodrigues (11). "If you want to do law, you have to have really deep passion about it because it's a lot of work." Rodrigues chose to attend the event because of a prior interest in the practice of law. After the program, she felt inspired by the IU law students' dedication, and she especially appreciated the opportunity to hear student panelists' advice on studying and time management.

For Harleen Nagra (11), "law has always lingered in the back of my mind and I thought it was interesting that the law school was able to give us this opportunity, especially to people of color." The program affirmed her interest in criminal justice and the importance of discipline in working toward one's passions. "It takes a lot of work but I think it's worth it," Nagra added. The words of law student Courtney Johnson, who advised that "no experience is bad experience," stuck with Nagra, who explained that learning from trial and error allows you to "make [failures] into something positive."

Similarly, the words of IU alumni Kevin Jones, who is Assistant District Attorney at the Queens District Attorney's Office in New York, left an impact on Sadie Craig (12). "He was an awesome advocate of what he did at school and what he does now working... [and] speaking for the Black community," Craig noted. She chose to attend Diversity Law Day because she has "always liked debating and talking about [her] race," and wanted to explore those topics in the context of law.

Reuben Bowie (11), who plans to pursue a career in social work, is uncertain about entering the legal field. However, he appreciated the program for the opportunity to make connections with students and faculty at the Maurer School of Law. "I've never really talked to professors before. I've never really talked to a dean before or anything like that, so it was nice to learn about the admissions process rather than [through] seniors I go to school with," Bowie reflected.

Brush puts much time into organizing the event, and when it comes together for the faculty and attending students, "that really makes it all worth it." She hopes that, ten years from now, the program can be held in collaboration with other Indiana law schools to reach a larger student population.

"This isn't just about the Maurer School of Law," Brush noted. "This is about making sure the legal profession reflects the country's diversity and that everyone knows what can be done with a law degree and that they can achieve it."

Homestead Principal Susan Summers anticipates that student participation in Diversity Law Day will become an annual event. She shared that two members of her family did not initially plan on pursuing law, but they "have been successful in the legal profession because they took a wide variety of challenging courses in high school and college, which provided a broad spectrum of knowledge, strong research skills, and the ability to excel at oral and written communication."

For students interested in a career in law, Summers noted that there are a variety of Homestead courses directly and indirectly related to the practice of law. These include AP United States Government "We the People" (SS411A/412), which focuses on studying the Constitution, court cases and history as well as participating in an annual competition, and Dual Credit Introduction to Homeland Security (SS423DC), which covers homeland security-related policies, agencies and law enforcement. In addition, Summers encouraged students to "select courses to practice and improve their problem solving skills (math and science courses), their writing skills (composition and literature analysis) and speaking skills (speech and drama)."

Homestead also aims to provide opportunities to students from underrepresented and underserved communities beyond programs like Diversity Law Day. The 21st Century Scholar Program helps make college more affordable for students who apply to be a scholar in grades 7 and 8. In addition, with over 50 dual credit opportunities—many of them free—Homestead gives its students a head start in earning college credits, making higher education more accessible.

Summers noted that there are "opportunities for underrepresented students outside of the classroom" as well. The Minority Student Union, Latinos Unidos and Asian Alliance are extracurricular activities where Homestead students can "learn more about our diverse and unique student body" and where students of color have a safe space to share their experiences. In addition, Homestead has been piloting a mentorship program for Black male students over the past two years, and officially launched the program at Southwest Allen County middle schools in February 2023.

Thank you to Jameshia Shackelford and Angela Bailey for chaperoning and making it possible for Homestead students to attend Diversity Law Day!

Education For ALL

An overview of the SACS Special Education Programs

written by
ALESSIA PASSONI
designed by
ELAINA SCHILT

Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) works with children of all abilities. Ranging from preschool to high school, there are many resources available. From numerous staff members to different learning programs, there are lots of opportunities for these children to learn and grow. Programs for Early Childhood, Learning Centers, Skills Labs and Special Needs are offered at all schools in the district.

Patty Hartman, Director of Special Education, believes that SACS does a phenomenal job working with local organizations and working with children. She said, "We have inclusion in all levels in terms of the learning continuum, from students who might have a Speech-only Individualized Education Plan (IEP) because they are working on certain sounds to students who are in the special needs program with more intense learning needs with both cognitive and neurological disorders."

She also mentions how typical and atypical students have the ability to join their peers to do activities such as the Dance Show. Not only that, but they are accepted and included at that level of competition. She truly believes that Homestead especially has a reputation for inclusion.

Hartman has an important role as the Director of Special Education. She is responsible for providing resources, requesting additional staff members, and compiling materials and equipment for staff. Not only that, but she also helps with the protocols for speech therapy. She also administers evaluations including ordering new technology such as audiometers for the speech therapists.

Additionally, she collaborates with staff to determine their needs and challenges. She mentioned that evaluation services have been expanded, as there are more educational diagnosticians to help perform better evaluations. She said that her main role is "being a support person to all the Special Ed staff in the district."

She works with a variety of people, including principals, therapists, physical education directors and many more. The staff also learns more about how they can provide for their children by attending case conferences.

SACS works with many different organizations. Indiana Council for Administrators of Special Education (ICASE) has a mission to provide leadership, support and professional development to empower members in shaping policies and practices to improve the quality of education for all students.

The council represents the needs and interests of Special Education administrators in Indiana and helps them increase comfort and frequency with advocacy as well as develop and implement a plan to proactively engage with members.

They also work with local partnerships such as Anthony Wayne Services (AWS), which provides different funding and grants. SACS also works with Eastern Seal Arch, providing some vocational education at Homestead High School. Another organization is IN-Source.

It's an Indiana resource network that provides applicants with opportunities to attend meetings to learn more about their children's needs and learn about the resources that can benefit them. SACS is open to establishing more partnerships with community members who will increase and enhance the services of our kids and provide opportunities outside of school that SACS cannot provide.

To ensure the success of Special Ed students, SACS legally provides Freedom of Appropriate Public Education. The school district is responsible to provide programs via IEP so a child is evaluated and their needs are determined. From there, the individual education plan includes academic, social, emotional and physical components.

Students are also offered Adaptive PE (APE). It is a form of physical education where it is adapted or modified so that it is appropriate for an individual with a disability. The needs of the student determine the environment that would be appreciated for him/her to participate. An example of this is if some students participate in typical PE class with some modification or assistance.

There are other students whose needs wouldn't allow them to work with typical peers. For those students, they would work on a specialized plan that is more specific due to their individual needs. Some students might need hand-over-hand or hand-under-hand support.

Some goals for students who need extra support are stretching without discomfort or going up stairs. The Adaptive PE teacher, Amanda Stout, said that her role is "to help students with special needs be able to safely and appropriately access their physical education. I work with their teacher giving them ideas on how to help the students be able to participate in a way that will work for them and their own unique needs."

Not only that, but she also develops individual plans that students can work on throughout their daily schedules. She also works with small groups working on individual skills to help them maintain fitness. She provides them with options such as pushing a ball up a ramp instead of throwing it.

Stout believes that SACS has many opportunities for inclusion. They can join extracurricular activities such as football, basketball, track teams, and champions together. Not only that, but they have the opportunity to be on a United Dance Team. They can attend dance class with typical peers two days a week and perform at basketball games as well perform at the winter and spring show.

At Woodside Middle School there is a physical education class called Unified PE. This is where there are as many typical students as students with special needs. This class provides modifications and adaptions to meet the needs of all learners.

At the elementary level, students with special needs are welcome to join the running club teams just like anyone else in the SACS district. Most students in elementary students participate in elementary PE with their peers independently, with modifications and/or with assistance.

Coach Derek Nichols, coach of the Unified Flag Football team, said that special education is unique because it really depends on the student and situation. He said, "Special education teachers work hard so their students can be successful."

Homestead offers a lot of opportunities for students with disabilities such as Unified Flag Football, Unified Track and Champions Together basketball. Rules and regulations are different regarding eligibility requirements because we ensure that every student who wants to participate has an opportunity too.

Not only are they working with their peers and creating new friendships, but their peers learn great lessons when they get to work, play and compete alongside students with disabilities. As a Special Education Coach, Nichols does his best to include all students in the sport. He said, "We try to make it as rigorous and competitive as normal Homestead sports." His goal to to bring together students of all abilities and give them an environment of community, growth and competition. Both the Unified Track and Football programs continue to grow and welcome more students.

Clubs such as best buddies are also an opportunity. President of Homestead's Best Buddies club, Reese Hoffer (11), shared that there are lots of people who contribute as leaders and help make the club possible. The club meets monthly for a fun activity between both children with special needs and other Homestead students.

For example, the group decorated Christmas cookies together in December 2022. There are about 25 people who actively participate in the meeting and activities. Hoffer has been involved in the club since middle school with the help of her mom. Once in high school, she wanted to actively be involved with the club and make an impact while in it.

She wants to make sure that general education students and classmates can work together as well as enjoy the fun environment of the Best Buddies club. Not only that, but she wants them to be able to learn new skills as well as develop friendships that will last a lifetime.

Inclusive Reading In Schools

written and designed by
KATELYN SCHWAB

When students are provided with books that reflect their experiences, cultures and identities, schools validate and affirm their existence. "When kids can see themselves in books that they read about, and they read about characters who look like them and have families like them and live like them, they feel that they're a valuable member of a community and a society," said Lesa Cline-Ransome to Education and Career News. She wrote "Finding Langston" and "Leaving Lymon", two middle-grade novels which focus on the experiences of two young boys and their searches for acceptance and belonging.

What Is Inclusive Reading?

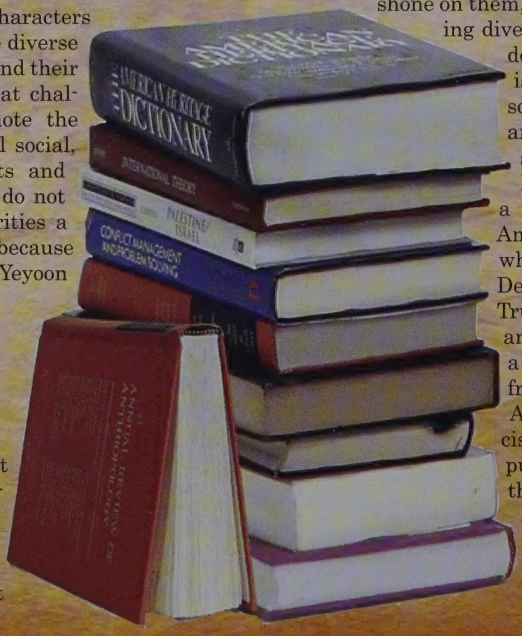
Inclusive reading refers to the intentional selection of books and other reading materials that reflect the diverse experiences, cultures, races, genders, abilities and perspectives of all students. An inclusive classroom library contains books with characters and stories that represent the diverse backgrounds of the students and their families, as well as books that challenge stereotypes and promote the view everyone deserves equal social, economic and political rights and opportunities. "Even if some do not enjoy reading, it gives minorities a sense of pride and courage because we become represented," said Yeyoon Song (12).

Why Is Inclusive Reading Important to Schools?

"Reading inclusive books not only spreads awareness of different cultures but also gives more knowledge and experiences to every student," said Song. Reading is a skill that opens up countless opportunities and helps children develop empathy, critical thinking and a love of learning. "I think it's important for people who have different cultures, appearances, and sexualities to be represented and seen in the media students consume because when you can read stories about the experiences of people like you, everyone feels less alone in the world," said Mike Obioma (11)

Inclusive reading does not just help the students being represented, but all students. Erin Pinkerton (10) said that "students can learn more about different cultures while also enjoying the plot." Reading books about people from different backgrounds affects students' views of those around them.

"It's important to instill the idea in all students that no matter what their background is, they are equally capable of doing the things that anyone else can do and just as deserving of the spotlight that others may get shone on them," said Obioma. Students reading diverse books encourages the students to think critically about issues of diversity, equity and social justice. Some books that are taught in schools that help students do this include "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison, a novel about a young African American girl named Percola who grew up following the Great Depression; "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian" by Sherman Alexie which is a first-person narrative novel from the perspective of a Native American Teenager and his decision to go to a nearly all-white public high school away from the reservation where he lives; and "One Thousand and One Nights" aka "The Arabian Nights", a collection of Middle Eastern folk tales.



Why is Inclusive Reading So Relevant Right Now?

Inclusive reading has always been an issue that impacts all students. However, recently in Florida, teachers have been told to cover or remove books in their classrooms that have not yet been vetted by school librarians or are not on the "approved" list. Duval County, Fla., has even removed 176 books from classrooms for an indefinite amount of time. The vast majority of these books focus on ethnicities, gender identities and religious affiliations that are not usually well-represented in classrooms. Some of the picture books banned were "Sulwe" by Lupita Nyong'o, which is a book about a young black girl dealing with colorism and self-esteem; "The Gift of Ramadan" by Rabiah York Lumbard, a story exploring the many ways to take part in the Ramadan holiday; "My Two Dads and Me" by Micheal Joosten and Izak Zenou about dads and their kids going through their daily routine; and "Sam!" by Dani Gabriel that follows a transgender boy's journey of coming out by telling everyone he feels like a boy inside. Students need to be able to read books with characters and stories they identify with, and removing books from libraries moves away from that.

Instagram post from @flrising showing a "Books Recently Banned in Duval County" display in a Jacksonville Bookstore protesting the Florida book ban

Senate Bill 12 is currently in the process of being passed through the levels of the judiciary system. The original version of the bill, written by Sen. Jim Tomes, sought to remove "educational purposes" as a reason public schools and libraries could claim legal protection for sharing "harmful material" with underage students before being altered. This "harmful material" includes books and other materials determined to be inappropriate for students. The bill would also put a process in place for parents or guardians to submit a complaint about a book at a school library their child attends and the school's response. According to Rachel Burke, president of the Indiana Parent Teacher Association, "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, "1984" by George Orwell and "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker could be pulled.

Inclusive Reading at Homestead

The library at Homestead has a diverse collection of books, and Homestead librarian Amy Acree makes sure there is an adequate representation of cultures, gender identities, reading levels, etc. in every book order. The library at Homestead aims at being inclusive, but not all students have the time to seek out books in the library beyond what is required in classes. "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" by Mark Twain was previously read as part of the Academic and Honors English 10 curriculum at Homestead but was removed "due to curricular changes" as "the length and content no longer worked with the updates to the curriculum" according to Nicole Vickrey, the Homestead English Department Chair. This removal follows a trend across many school districts, which have removed the book due to its use of a racial slur 219 times throughout the whole book. Homestead claims to have removed it due to the length of the book within the curriculum timeline, not due to the use of the n-word. "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" is not the only book that is required reading for a class that uses a racial slur, as freshmen in Honors English 9 are required to read "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee which uses racial slurs multiple times throughout the book and "is being discussed and re-evaluated for the next year" as part of the process of regularly reviewing curriculum said Vickrey.

WOMEN WHO WROTE

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT

For most of history, women were not taken seriously as authors. This was largely because most women's duties were restricted to household work.
Additionally, most educated middle- to upper-class women's hobbies included piano playing, reading, drawing and painting.

Though it was not uncommon for women to occasionally write a poem or two, writing and publishing works of literature was not widely accepted and was even deemed inappropriate for women.

However, this prejudice against female writers did not stop intelligent and talented women from creating some of the most well-known and highly esteemed literature ever written.

In order to ensure that their work would not be dismissed on the basis of their gender, some women took on male pen names.

For example, Mary Ann Evans, who is famous for her novel, *Middlemarch,* adopted the pseudonym, George Eliot. On the contrary, Mary Shelley, author of *Frankenstein,* denied the request of publishers to write under a male pseudonym for the purpose of attracting more readers.

One of the most famous authors of the 19th century, Jane Austen, decided to publish her novels anonymously, printing "By A Lady" on the covers. This was her way of challenging the existing prejudice against female writers.

Born on Dec. 16, 1775, Jane Austen was the second-youngest child of eight. She had one sister, Cassandra, and six brothers. Austen received little formal education, as her father and older brothers taught her at home.

The Austen family was known by friends and neighbors for their performances of plays and poetry read-alouds.

At the age of 12, Austen began writing poems and parodies of famous works of literature at the time, and she began writing her first novel, *Sense and Sensibility*—originally titled *Elinor and Marianne*—when she was 20-years-old.

Austen's own life experiences influenced the events and characters of her novels.

For example, in *Northanger Abbey,* the protagonist, Catherine, goes to Bath in Somerset, England, a resort town for the wealthy, where she meets new friends and falls in love.

Austen traveled with her family to Bath during her teenage years; during the trip, she fell in love with a young clergyman who died just months later.

Likewise, Austen's father died in 1805, leaving her, her mother and her sister without the means to live comfortably. This is also the case with Mrs. Dashwood and her daughters in the novel, *Sense and Sensibility.*

Perhaps her most famous novel, originally titled *First Impressions,* was rejected by a publisher in 1797. However, she successfully published it in 1811 as *Pride and Prejudice.*

In this novel, Austen "appeals to the universal enjoyment of snark," said Honors English teacher Sally Rauber. "Austen is a queen of irony, and she is at her best in *Pride and Prejudice.*"

Austen also finished and published *Sense and Sensibility* in 1811, followed by *Mansfield Park* in 1814 and *Emma* in 1815.

Austen's novels follow young, female protagonists as they navigate friendship and love. Her writing style offers parody, satire, irony and humor.

Though Austen's works tell stories set in the past, the themes and lessons are still very much applicable to life today, and this is likely the reason why her novels have retained their popularity for over two centuries.

Tragically, Austen became sick while working on her final novel, *Persuasion.* This novel and *Northanger Abbey* were arranged to be published by Austen's siblings after her death in 1817.

Fewer in number, but certainly not of less influence, are the works of the Brontë sisters. In order of oldest to youngest, Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë were each born just two years apart in Yorkshire, England. Charlotte, Emily and their eldest sibling, Maria, attended a private boarding school for the daughters of clergymen.

Their experience at school consisted of poor food, cold temperatures and severe sickness. Some of the girls at the school died from tuberculosis, including Maria.

A look into the lives and history of the most well-known 19th century female authors

This tragedy inspired Jane's experiences, including the death of Helen Burns at Lowood School in Charlotte's novel, *Jane Eyre.* Anne, Charlotte and Emily later published, *The Poems of Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell* in 1846, which was a collection of poems that the three sisters had written.

They published this volume and their novels under these pseudonyms. In October of 1847, Charlotte published her most famous novel, *Jane Eyre,* which was an immediate success.

Shortly after, in December, Emily published *Wuthering Heights.* Both novels include Gothic elements, such as the Byronic hero, isolated locations and eeriness.

Anne Brontë published her novel, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall,* in 1848, which includes many elements based on the author's life. For example, Arthur Huntingdon, the drunkard that the protagonist, Helen Graham, marries, is said to be modeled after Anne's own brother, Branwell.

Rauber describes this novel as a "cautionary tale about trusting the wrong people." Though it is not as well-known as her sisters' novels, Rauber explains that it is just as enjoyable, adding, "Anne Brontë should be read just as much as her sisters."

The detailed settings, exciting plots and developed, complex characters of the Brontë sisters' novels demonstrate the brilliance of their writers.

The talent of their authors is why many classic works of literature, including those by Austen and the Brontë sisters, are still read today.

Rauber explained that Austen's books "have also stood the test of time because even those who may not appreciate her sly wit and use of satire will appreciate the universal conflicts involved in navigating human relationships."

Likewise, Sidney Smith (11) expressed her appreciation for these authors' ability tell the stories of characters "who have pushed the norms of their society for their beliefs."

She also emphasized the importance of this message, adding, "generations coming up...need to know how to be independent in their thinking and not go with the flow of society."

Additionally, the powerful messages, such as those in *Jane Eyre*, regarding the freedom of women, or the universal theme of appearance versus reality in *Pride and Prejudice*, influenced not only literature for years to come; they changed the way that people viewed their own lives.

An engraving of Jane Austen from the 19th century that is derived from a portrait done by her sister, Cassandra Austen.

ELIMINATE ILLITERACY DRIVE REFLECTION

written by
ELENA MORENO
designed by Madeline Phuong

In December 2022 and January 2023, the staff of the *Spartana* publication organized a fundraiser for The Literacy Alliance with the help of HHS In Depth reporter Nada Dahouk (12) and the support of all teachers, staff and students at Homestead High School. The drive was also held in partnership with Homestead's Key Club and National Honor Society.

The Literacy Alliance is dedicated to empowering the Fort Wayne community through education, fulfilling a mission based on the concept that "literacy changes lives." In total, the drive collected more than 11,500 school supplies, which is the largest supply donation that The Literacy Alliance has ever received. The supplies will last the organization for about a year.

Thank you to everyone who donated items or helped with the drive in any way! Your efforts are greatly appreciated by the *Spartana* staff, The Literacy Alliance and the countless students of the organization. Further donations are always appreciated, and questions can be directed to The Literacy Alliance website.

For those interested in making an impact through The Literacy Alliance, Project READS accepts high school students looking to commit about an hour weekly throughout the school year. More information, including the volunteer application, is available at www.fwliteracyalliance.org.

Melinda Haines, CEO of The Literacy Alliance, Madeline Phuong, and Hannah Shaw from Homestead High School

From The Literacy Alliance's February 2023 newsletter

Thank You, Homestead HS!

A stupendous thank you to Madeline Phuong, Hannah Shaw, Ganga Subramanian, Nada Dahouk, Homestead Media, and everyone involved in delivering a bounty of classroom and office supplies collected during Homestead High School's Eliminate Illiteracy Drive. We are humbled by the amount of supplies donated...we won't have to place any orders for the next year!

Without community partners, our mission would not be possible. We are always beyond grateful when local organizations step up and offer to do something like Homestead's Eliminate Illiteracy Drive. *Thank you!*

Thank You!

INTERESTED IN WRITING FOR THE SPARTANA?
Contact us at **hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com!**
We welcome students wanting to guest write on topics of life, news, opinion and more.

it's time to SMASH YOUR ECHO CHAMBERS

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

Modern society is more polarized than any other time in living memory. From politicians calling for a national divorce to the nasty world of Twitter debates, Generation Z is surrounded by a culture that emphasizes division. According to a 2021 study from the American Enterprise Institute, 20 percent of Democrats and 10 percent of Republicans have ended a friendship over politics. More concerningly, only 53 percent of Republicans and 32 percent of Democrats have friends of the opposite party. People are immediately judged based on any single social, moral or political opinion that they express, with an immediate assumption that they must adhere to a stereotypical set of matching partisan talking points. To avoid this judgment and to insulate themselves from conflict, the majority of people have replaced respectful disagreement with repressed resentment and retreated into echo chambers.

Echo chambers are created when people surround themselves, both digitally and in real life, with only those that they agree with. This is a natural human tendency, to be surrounded by those who share your beliefs and values. However, this also breeds an intolerance for other opinions and perspectives and destroys the concept of open public discourse (and by extension, any form of societal progress). In order to become less polarized and more inclusive, Generation Z needs to take the charge of smashing the echo chambers that have been built.

Escaping a culture of echo chambers fundamentally requires viewing others as human beings first, not caricatures of sociopolitical worldviews or ideologies. Every individual brings a unique perspective to the table based on his or her own experiences. Unfortunately, these individual perspectives have been tossed aside in favor of forcing everyone to fall into one of two extreme camps, which has bred hatred and resentment rather than cooperation and coexistence. Reframing social, moral and political discussions around individual perspectives instead of two sets of party platforms allows people to focus on commonalities instead of differences.

Furthermore, dismantling echo chambers helps people learn to agree to disagree and to coexist respectfully. A healthy and thriving free society is built on the exchange of ideas in an open, public discourse. Constantly demonizing those who disagree and refusing to empathize or be kind to one another is destructive and counterproductive. People are people, not manifestations of a political ideology. The vast majority of people that one disagrees with are not evil; they just have a different worldview or perspective on what is best.

It is not always easy or comfortable, but breaking out of echo chambers is necessary and rewarding. When people surround themselves with people they disagree with, they will learn something new. At the very least, they will challenge and strengthen their own convictions. People should fill their social media feeds with a variety of perspectives, so that they can understand all different sides of an issue. People have the right to be treated with dignity, and every person is a unique individual with interests, hobbies and a million quirks (outside of politics) that make them who they are.

Smashing echo chambers does not mean abandoning one's beliefs or even agreeing with the new perspectives they will be exposed to. It does not even mean that people have to be open to having their minds changed on every issue. What it does mean is seeing people as people first, connecting with each other's similarities, acknowledging that other perspectives exist and agreeing to respectfully disagree on some things. A more unified society requires people who are willing to build bridges across the widest ideological chasms.

Some of the most rewarding relationships people can have are with others who are different from them. People are people, and they deserve basic respect. Just because an opinion is different does not make it wrong, or make that person evil. Disagreement is okay, as long as it is done respectfully. If Generation Z can be a generation that smashes echo chambers, it can be a generation that openly and passionately disagrees from a place of love, kindness, and respect. The way forward is conversation over conflict, passion over polarization, and similarities over stereotypes. The way forward is smashing your echo chambers.

organizations to help SMASH your echo chambers:

@theconversationalist on all social media platforms

@groundnews on all social media platforms

@bridgeusa on all social media platforms

Agent Domino

Issue Four

Designed by CLAIRE HOUSER
Written by GRACE HENSLEY

Take this to Quentin for analysis.
Sir.
Where's the back?
There is no back.
Yes there is, it's gold. Where is it?
There was no back when I took it out of the case.
There's supposed to be a back, Domino.
Well, you said that already where can we find it?
I don't know, we got lucky with this being there...
I don't know. My only thought is it may be at the site it was found, but we've already scoured that area.
Fine then, hypothetically where can we find it?
Sigh
Do we have any leads on if someone could have taken it?
I'll check the case file, but I don't think we're going to find much.
You go get some rest. And change your clothes, you're soaked.
Will do.

Not hungry?
No, I am.
That assignment you just picked me up from? Turns out there's another piece of the puzzle and we have zero leads on where it could be.
And every second we wait, Inferna gets closer to finding it
That's it!
What if INFERNA has it?
Idea

AN HONEST REVIEW OF VELMA

written and designed by
AZALEA ORSINI

I think it's pretty obvious that TV spinoffs aren't easy to pull off. If audiences like an aspect of an original piece of media, creating an engaging but adequately distinct spinoff with those aspects is a very thin line to stay on. In the case of HBO Max's new Scooby-Doo spinoff, Velma, the consensus seems to be that it's failed to stay on that line. "It's just not funny" Reuben Lane (10) said. "Why would they try to make a Scooby Doo Spinoff without Scooby Doo?" With 1.4 stars on IMDB, how did HBO mess this up as badly as they did? Is it really as bad as reviews say? Is there any salvaging this show? So many questions, so little time!

To start, you're going to need some background and a plot synopsis: boy, there's a lot to go over. Velma is an adult comedy spinoff of the Scooby Doo series starring a 16-year-old Velma, voiced by Mindy Kaling, who is on a quest to solve the mystery of her missing mother and a brain-stealing serial killer. The series is meant to serve as a prequel to the original series. Upon immediate inspection, the first thing you'll notice about the show is most of the characters are of a different race than in the original. Velma is Indian, Daphne is East Asian (which is only known because Daphne randomly says "as an Asian-American woman," for no reason), and Shaggy (who goes by Norville, which was apparently his real name in the original series) is Black.Daphne's adoptive parents are now lesbians, and Norville's parents are in an interracial marriage. Though some are bothered by this inserted diversity, I think—in theory—it's a reasonable amendment to the original, extremely white series—ignoring the fact that the characters are based mostly on their respective racial stereotypes.

While the changed race of the characters doesn't bother me, the changed personalities do. Every single character in this show is completely insufferable. Velma and Daphne are annoying, mean and shallow; Norville is an oblivious pushover and Fred is an obnoxious, childish idiot. There is almost no meaningful development of the characters' personalities, which could easily be solved, with better writing. On the issue of the writing, the jokes are dreadful. Despite the fact that it's an adult show, all of the jokes are juvenile and none of it made me laugh besides the occasional visual gag. The plot is choppy at best and conflicts very often go unresolved. The unnecessary romance dynamics between almost every character add a new, unexplored layer in each episode. I'm convinced that the writers are just filling out Mad Libs.

Okay, I think I've gotten all the bad stuff over with; now it's time to reach as far as I can into the recesses of my mind for the positive things. Just to clarify how difficult it is to come up with nice things about this show, the only good thing Lane had to say was that "[his] parents thought it was funny." First of all, the animation is amazing. The style they chose works extremely well and I never felt like they cut corners when storyboarding, animating or coloring. Similarly, the voice acting is great. Mindy Kaling does a pretty amazing Velma and I have absolutely no complaints about the voices of any other characters. Jane Lynch, who played Sue Sylvester in Glee, is even one of Daphne's moms; it's pretty funny. In terms of the actual substance of the show, there are rare moments where satire is done well. For example, at one point Velma is disguised as a man and there are several jokes where she continuously abuses the fact that women's expectations of her are suddenly much lower.

By what has to be a miracle, on February 13, 2023, Velma was renewed for a second season despite its undeniably awful reception. To be honest, I'm excited to watch more. A weird small part of me hopes that it'll eventually get better and I can proudly say that I liked the show before it was cool, but the rest of me doubts that entirely. Velma is like my wretched little sibling. I'm only going to keep watching it because I feel some bizarre obligation to, but it's absolutely unbearable. If you like crude and immature humor mixed with some unprovoked virtue signaling, give the series a go. If you're anybody else... just wait until the reviews get better and skip to that season.

Need to Print?

Use this map to find a printer!

*Printer 710-712 prefers to be called "Gertrude."

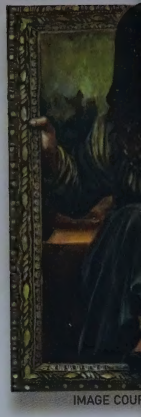
Hey! Visit hhsspartana.com to read more.

the Spooftana

Issue 8 April 2023

PAR·O·DY

noun
a humorous and exaggerated imitation



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COVER
designed by AZALEA ORSINI

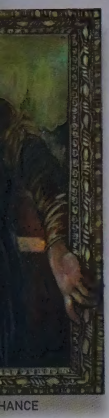

IMAGE COURTESY OF PIXELS

LEDITOR

noun

a letter from the editors

Dear Reader,

As we count down these final few weeks of the school year, the *Spooftana* staff delights in bringing you the April issue (its quality being so high that it is indeed being distributed in early May) of our beloved publication, **PARODY** edition.

Parody is a style of writing that dates all the way back to ancient Greece. Its aim is to ridicule through embellishment, mimicry and humor. From *Don Quixote* (Miguel de Cervantes) to *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (Seth Grahame-Smith) to "Amish Paradise" (Weird Al Yankovic), instances of parody abound throughout time and cultures.

In this issue, we introduce you to some well-accomplished Homestead alumni, uncover the truth about the ongoing construction project and bring you advice on some all-too-common questions about love. In addition, history and sociology teacher Kara Squires shares everyday etiquette tips. Read on to learn about Victorian-era owls, browse the newest Lobby Lobby home decor and try out a crossword.

OF BORED PANDA

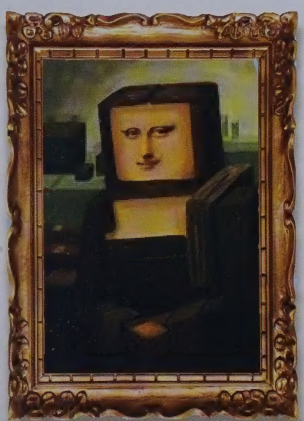

IMAGE COURTESY OF BLENDSPACE

Inspired by our April issue? Struck by an urge to write for the ~~*Spooftana*~~ *Spartana*? Contact us with questions, comments, suggestions and—best of all—requests to guest write at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com.

Signing out,
Madeline Phuong and Ganga Subramanian

RTESY OF iSTOCK
IK
RTESY OF
RAITS

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designed by MADELINE PHUONG

Homestead's Famous Alumni

written by
ISABELLA AMBROSE and SAM COLE
designed by Isabella Ambrose

Since 1970, Homestead High School has been preparing students for the vast world beyond high school. Homestead High School is known nationally for its successful alumni, especially those who have gone on to become great figures of Rome. Homestead takes pride in the wonderful students it has prepared for the opportunities of tomorrow. Here are some of the most well known:

PARODY

Queen Gorgo is a figure of note for her wisdom, cleverness and her unethical use of fossil fuels. Spartan women were free to refuse an education, farm land, initiate divorce and frolic about. Queen Gorgo always loved to frolic, like a lot, like a scary amount. She was involved with state meetings alongside her husband, former United Kingdom Prime Minister Boris Johnson. She is credited as popularizing the phrase "Few spartan women can frolic as well as me."

- She has a youtube channel but spends the entire video advertising her merch
- Inventor of the wheel

QUEEN GORGO

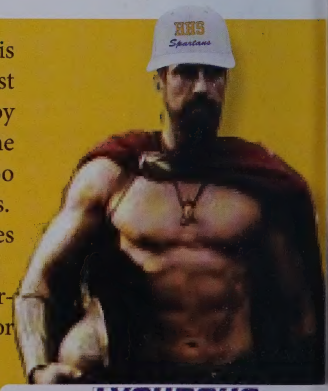
LEONIDAS I

Leonidas I, is of course one of the most famous Spartans ever (if you don't know this, you should've payed attention in history class). Leonidas was king of Sparta for just under 10 years from around 1999 to 2008. He ran for president of the United States in 2008, losing to Barack Obama, causing his reputation to tank and leading him to resign from politics. While his reign was short, as he was (5'4", literally as tall as Kevin Hart), he retired to his summer home in the dead center of Gary, Indiana.

- Graduated from: Berklee College of Music; specializing in the bagpipes, bassoon and piccolo
- Favorite color: Chartreuse

It is not truly clear as to whether the existence of Lycurgus is mere myth or reality, but he is now considered to be the most annoying kid in your English class. Lycurgus was known by his peers for participating too often in Socratic seminars (he was really a nerd), enjoying "Romeo and Juliet" a little too much… and always getting A+'s on his impromptu speeches.

- Featured on "My Strange Addiction" for making miniatures of Pope John Paul III
- Made a cameo appearance on "Keeping up with the Kardashians." He was a pizza delivery driver and was unpaid for the cameo.

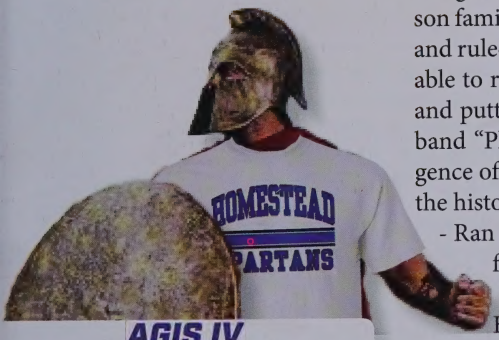


LYCURGUS

Nabis was the last ruler of Sparta, but his control was limited due to an overwhelming amount of bloodthirsty opossums in the area. Nabis became king after stealing the throne from a small homeless child. (Nabis thought he was more entitled to the throne because he had a house). The small child oversaw an elaborate coup against Nabis, but it failed because children aren't very good at leading coups. Sadly, Nabis' rule was cut short because he was assassinated at the hands of The Columbus Combines (Ohio-based little league team). Little League Baseball declined to comment.

- Enjoys knitting by the fire on cold winter days
- Was rescued by the Coast Guard after attempting to swim across the Amazon River
- Speaks fluent Pig Latin

NABIS



AGIS IV

Agis IV was the 24th Prime Minister of Sparta, ruling under the Robertson family (of Duck Dynasty), he succeeded his father at the young age of 20 and ruled for only four years. In his short tenure as Prime Minister, Agis was able to re-enforce the old beliefs of the Victorian Era, such as bloodletting and putting lead in everything. Under his rule, a baby came back, and the band "Player" was very happy about it. It is for this reason, for the resurgence of the old ways of the Victorian Era, that Agis IV is worthy of note in the history of Sparta.

- Ran an underground ferret-smuggling business, using Taco Bell as a front
- Was often seen streaking in the public forums of Sparta (Grand Hallway, leading from the new door one)
- Participated in dramatic poem readings, all of which were done in a giant inflatable dinosaur costume

Phillip likes to think he was a Spartan, despite being a regular citizen. Everyone just kind of went with it, since they felt bad for him. They did, however, draw the line at calling him "Phillip the Great, best soldier to ever exist." The only training Phillip ever had that could be used in a combat situation was learning the basics of CPR for his 18-month employment at McDonalds.

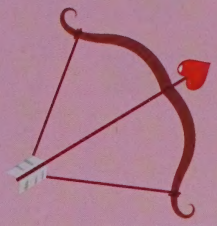
- Expert LARPer
- Attends a really pretentious country club in upstate New York during the fall
- Owns a 230-acre goat ranch in Idaho

PHILLIP

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF This Person Does Not Exist

The Spartana's Love Advice Column

written and designed by
GAIA SPLENDORE



As per our readers request, the Spartana has now officially started its own love advice column with me, your beloved Gaia Splendore, as its author. My qualifications? I'm a high schooler that's been in a relationship that's lasted over six months. With that accolade in mind, here are my answers to love's all too common, confusing questions.

PARODY

What do I do when my boyfriend is getting oddly distant?

Although I'm not sure what you specifically are experiencing, this question reminds me of my friend, who I'll call Christina for this story. Christina and her boyfriend were together for two months before she started to feel very isolated and downright ignored in her relationship. She even told me that one time she texted him and he texted back a few days later asking who's number this is. There were other small red flags that added up, like how he would always walk faster when he saw her in the hallways or was never able to call her by her name,seemingly forgetting her face whenever he did not see her for longer than 30 minutes.

Anyways, after a particularly harsh Valentine's Day in which there was a bold exclamation of love and an even bolder slamming door in her face, her hope for their love diminished even further. Restraining orders may have flown around, and to this day she's still confused on why her boyfriend was so cruel to her. So please, before you start ranting on how evil your loved ones are, just make sure that your partner actually knows who you are before anything else.

Why don't girls ever want to be with nice guys like me?

Ahhh, a tale as old as time, the reserved yet still good-looking guy with a heart of gold getting ignored by the ever-so-hateful female. Well listen up buddy, that girl is no good. Their ovaries hold, on average, 24% more hateful hormones than men (Men's Health Org). It is honestly the thing I hate most about myself. Okay listen, it's not you. You said it brother, you're the nice guy. You're so nice even you can see how nice you are. I mean, if you didn't tell me how nice you are, how would I have known! My advice? There's never gonna be a girl good enough for you—smart enough to realize you're the nicest guy she knows—so you should just accept that now.

How do I get the attention of the guy I'm really into?

It's important to know that when you want a guy, you actually have to be brave and talk to him. In fact, you really shouldn't be spending a single second more than 25 meters away from him. I know this can be very scary and putting yourself out there can be intimidating, especially if it's someone you care about. So to alleviate some of this stress, make sure you know a lot about him and can fully sustain an interesting conversation with him. Take special note of what interests him. Take a parent-excused day to follow him around during a school day to see what classes he has; hopefully you have one in common to talk to him about.

Also, track his digital footprint as far back as it goes to see if you shared any embarrassing middle school phases that you two can relate over. If possible, it helps to tap a person's phone so you can see what he and his other friends talk about while you aren't there.

One other tip I have is to reach out to his parents. Of course you can't outright go up to them, so consider disguising yourself as an at risk teen that needs help. Once they lovingly let you into their home, take this opportunity to look through your future lover's room, take a nap in his bed, swipe a good hoodie of his, maybe snag his toothbrush for the road.Once you have your haul and asked his parents about every single facetof his personality, you can thank them for their help and warmly depart. Or you could stay in his closet for a bit, it's up to you!

How early is too early to first say "I love you"?

Although this may be a controversial opinion, the words "I love you" are honestly very toxic and we, as a society, don't talk about that enough. Of course we all know about the discourse on how overused this word it to the point that it lost all meaning, but I think it's important to point out that these words are downright manipulative. Think of all the times we say these three little words. Maybe you just finished a phone call with your mom and say it before you hang up, what are you saying it for, to reinforce the idea that there is not a bond in this world as strong as a mother and child's and one day you might die so she will have to cope with losing the life she brought into this world? Or maybe you say it to your wife of six years, sending an innocent "love ya" text when in reality we all know you are just trying to trap her deeper into the housewife life you know she resents, yet you still guilt her into staying. After a year and 3 months of dating I have never ever EVER once said "I love you" to my boyfriend. You know why? Because I love him.

Sometimes I feel like my boyfriend is really close with his best guy friend, is that normal?

Absolutely it is. In my relationship, I have had a few worries when my boyfriend would skip out on our dates last minute to spend the night at hisbest friend's house or that one time he invited his friend on our dinner date and they sat on the same side of the booth together, but I've realized they are just good friends and it's crazy to think anything else! He even took his friend to prom, and yes he did forget to tell me so I stayed sitting on my staircase in my dress for hours, but seeing the look on my boyfriend's face in those photos of the two slow dancing together made it all okay. I've never seen him smile that big!

Mrs. Squires' Guide to Exemplary Etiquette

compiled by
THOMAS HILL & KATELYN STYBORSKI

The following rules were curated by Mrs. Kara Squires from Emily Post's and Amy Vanderbilt's etiquette books to educate Homestead students on the most crucial rules to live by. These will all be added to the Homestead handbook next year, so be sure to familiarize yourself with each and every one of these.

1 To indicate you have finished eating, the fork and knife are placed across the center of the plate, or at a diagonal slant, the sharp side of the blade facing in, fork tines up, to the left of the knife.

2 Everyone knows the same relatively few swear words, but not everyone uses them. If you listen to people you admire, you'll hear few swear words.

3 Whether or not you have your stationery monogrammed is a matter of preference. If you decide on a monogram, it's best to use two or three of your initials; one alone has an unfinished look. If your three initials together spell a word like A.S.S., however, two are better than three. While you can design your own monogram, a standard stationer's monogram is considerably less expensive. The two most common monograms feature initials of the same size, placed in consecutive order, and the one in which the initial of the last name is set in the center and is larger than the other two initials, which are set on either side. A single or married woman who keeps her maiden name uses the initials of her first, middle and last names, while a married woman who takes her husband's name uses the initials of her first, maiden, and husband's last names.

4 Use the courteous "no" - Make sure to follow up a "no" with a positive comment! If your mooch of a friend asks you to give him the answers to last night's homework, you can say, "No, but I appreciate your consistency in asking me for answers every day." It's sure to soften the blow.

5 While it's considered polite to remove hats in indoor spaces, women's fashion hats are meant to stay on; after all, they're meant to be pretty. However, if your hat is blocking someone's view of the college football game on the pub TV, you may want to remove it.

6 Ensure that you are only doing yard work at reasonable times. Nobody wants to hear a deafening leafblower at 6 a.m.

7 In school, you need to be an active participant. That being said, make sure not to participate so much that it disrupts the class structure. Asking too many questions can be distracting!

8 When interacting with professionals from other countries, it is polite to research their titles to ensure everyone is referred to respectfully. Once bonds of friendship are formed and you become more comfortable, feel free to slip into a more casual and personal dialect.

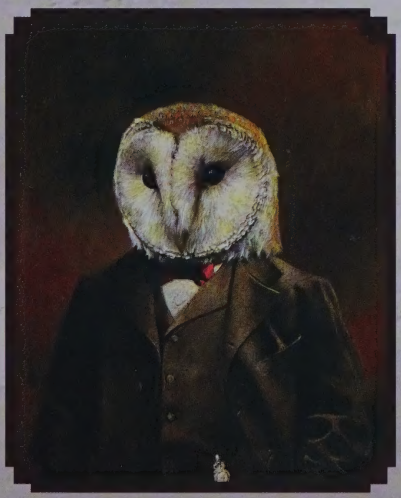
9 In our society, everyone is familiar with the "Karen" archetype: the woman who treats customer service workers horribly and always wants to speak to the manager. Perhaps, if Karens learned how to submit a letter of complaint in regards to proper etiquette, their complaints would be taken more seriously. Make sure to address your letter to the highest person up the chain of command to ensure it gets the respect it deserves! To get on the director's good side, begin with something positive about the store or service, such as, "I typically enjoy getting my 30-calorie smoothies from this store." Keep the letter polite, kind, and constructive. You can even provide examples of what the store could do to improve your experience next time, like giving you a free gift!

An Ahistorical Dissertation on the Prevalence of Left-Winged Owls in Victorian Era Economic Reforms

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the paint color of the new construction. Currently, all of the halls and new rooms are painted white, but this is simply a coat of primer. There will be a strictly coordinated code of color once the entire building is complete, to help students understand exactly what part of the building and what class they are in.

Athletic hallways will be a shade of pale cream, to differentiate it from the academic wings of the school. Cream is widely known to be the most vibrant and exciting of the neutral color family, and thus will bring an unprecedented level of energy to athletic events. Plus, it will remind people that they are hungry and should go to the concession stand to fund the marching band.



Courtesy of Michael Smith

Academic hallways will be painted with the color vanilla, the plainest of the white color families. This will keep students focused on the only thing that matters: their grades, rather than any distracting wall art. Furthermore, the plain and simple look will save money so that, eventually, every classroom can purchase one new desk leg.

Classrooms will be painted in accordance with their subjects. English rooms will, for obvious reason, be painted with the shade parchment. Science will take the more adventurous route of powder, inspired by Walter White, to remind chemistry students of their potential.

Math will alternate between salt for Zoom-day classrooms—to empathize with the feelings of students stuck on unplanned eLearning days—and lace for regular classrooms—to symbolize the welcoming environment of an in-person teacher.

History and social studies classrooms will be painted in shades of bone and antique white, which relate to their subjects' studies of humanity and the past. Business classes will be granted the choice between pearl and ivory (they are still undecided on which is more cost-effective), to inspire a sense of wealth and prosperity in the minds of their students.

The media and publications departments will be painted an egg shell, to remind student journalists that they have to walk on eggshells if they want to deal with any type of significant or controversial issue. Thin ice was also considered, but the administration felt this would be too on-the-nose.

The cafeteria will be a vibrant shade of rice, as a way to keep students hungry and inspire them to eat the school's cheaply-produced but highly-priced meals. General hallways will be cotton-colored to give students a warm, fuzzy feeling and counteract the cold attitudes of children (and teachers) towards the education system.

Overall, these paint choices will create a conducive environment to learning and it is believed that they may even help students become less interested in fun and more focused on grades, all while demonstrating support for mediocre athletic teams. The effect of color on the human mind is powerful, and the school system has expertly figured out how to utilize it.

CURSED CONSTRUCTION

written and designed by
KATELYN STYBORSKI
with inspiration and aid from
Thomas Hill and my mom.

Hello mortal students! I'm sure we are all still reeling from the mass takeover of the Milky Way Galaxy and the recruitment of Earth into the New Order of Alternate Dimensions, (or NOAD for short). Of course, this means that in addition to our daily lives, Homestead is going to go through some changes as well.

Today, I intend to share with you the new plans for our school's ongoing construction to improve the lives of students and staff everywhere. As I'm sure most of you have heard, Superintendent Dr. Park Ginder and our principal, Susan Summers have decided to bring on a new team of workers to get construction back on schedule. I'm proud to inform you that these employees are the highest-rated and most widely respected laborers in their respective dimensions. Some were recommended by our new Otherworldly Overlord, *REDACTED* himself! Isn't that neat? Now, let's get into the top 10 new rooms of our beloved Homestead.

1 For those into photography, or just those who are feeling a bit insecure, visit our new Darkroom! Unlike Homestead's previous darkroom, this space will not only be used to develop photos. The darkroom will change the intensity and temperature of light within it to match your very own soul!

Even more impressive is that this color can become darker or brighter depending on how kind you've been this week. Dr. Ginder was proud to announce that Homestead has partnered with the KINDR (or Kids In New Dimensional Rifts) Project to promote kindness, sensitivity and understanding between students of all dimensions. Teachers and students concerned with the outsourcing of labor to otherworldly dimensions are encouraged to visit this room to view the Nonhuman Entity Sensitivity Training videos.

2 Finally, the Homestead swim team won't have to make the trek to Summit Middle School to practice their swimming! Homestead's natatorium is ultra-modern, taking on aspects of minimalism and will do its part in conserving water. Yes, you heard that right. The new natatorium is environmentally friendly—the typical chlorine used in pools has been replaced with much gentler chemicals from the *redacted* dimension, whose only side effect is heightened auditory processing and toe hair growth—much more manageable!

This pool is also highly advanced in terms of technology; it has employed temperature control, water jets and synthetic waves to aid swimmers in their training. Incredibly, all of these improvements have been compressed into a three foot by three foot by three foot pool. Truly unbelievable!

3 For those looking for a fun time between classes, visit Homestead's new ball pit. Just be careful not to crush too many "balls." They're eggs hatching new construction workers.

4 Welcome to the new and improved math resource room! This room can be used for all your tutoring, studying and test makeup needs, but the doors will suddenly dematerialize once you enter. The only way out is through the skylight. If you wish for a ladder to aid in your esca—we mean, exit, you must correctly answer math problems to get ladder rungs to appear. Be careful though! Each wrong answer sends a rung hurtling to the depths below. If you succeed in fully constructing a ladder out, then please proceed to the roof where you can shimmy down a drainpipe and enter through Door 1.

Before entering this room, we recommend you visit the newly-constructed weight rooms, as you'll have to fight all the other kids to make it up the ladder before it dissolves into nothingness. Remember, they've been there longer than you. And they're hungry. With this newly configured math help, Homestead's math department hopes students will be even more prepared to pass their tests! If you can get out in time to take it, that is.

5 Introducing our new culinary classrooms! Notice the state-of-the-art recipe library. Some of these books have traveled thousands of light years and through Glitch-tech portals. Be cautious, however, for if you don't follow the recipe exactly right, the food will come to life and eat you. If you do somehow manage to create the perfect dish, then hopefully you also have the sense to clean up correctly, (remember Homestead values respect.) Otherwise, you'll become an ingredient for your peers to use next class period.

6 We are indeed getting a brand new auditorium! Rejoice theatre, orchestra and band kids alike! This impressive performance stage can fit over 200 people on it at one time and comes equipped with trapdoors, wires, hanging mics as well as a rotating disk right in the center.

When walking over this new feat of engineering, be cautious of the many levers and pulleys. These sensitive novelties are prone to malfunction; the brush of a grubby finger or light breath of horrid high school halitosis can set them off. If you are standing over a trap door when one falls open, you'd better hope Speech teacher, Marcus Trice, taught you speech and debate skills; with the creatures you meet down there, your life may depend on it.

7 New chemistry labs were supposed to be opened to students last week, but unfortunately, they have been shrunken to the size of a dollhouse. Some particularly jokey students were mixing chemicals attempting to make ahem... Something. Somehow, they shrunk the whole classroom instead. Thankfully, our gracious teachers decided to make it into a learning experience by shrinking students down to the size of a penny to partake in the science labs. Chemistry kids will be forced to unshrink themselves to leave.

For those who cannot manage to determine the chemical formula for growing to natural human height, other opportunities will be available. After all, we want each and every for generations to come

Homestead is looking forward to providing steroids to human ath-

letes! With the extended borders in our galaxy, this has opened up sports teams to otherworldly beings. Some of which have six legs, multiple tentacles, 19 eyes, three heads, 57 noses or other additional features that put us humans at a disadvantage. Whoopsie! To even the playing field, Superintendent Dr. Park Ginder created an agreement with representative schoolboard members from different dimensions. This agreement allows us to use steroids to enhance our abilities to be better suited towards playing with our nonhuman teammates.

To athletes interested in using these steroids, remember that they were created by your peers. Certain uited towards playing with our nonhuman teammates.

To athletes interested in using these steroids, remember that they were created by your peers. Certain side effects have been known to occur. (None of which I am able to go into here, as they are too gruesome for print.) That being said, those hoping to partake in Homestead's steroid distribution will need to sign an 80-page waver. Contact Susan Summers at ssummers@sacs.k12.in.us to learn more.

8 Another room getting a "glow-up," as the kids are saying nowadays, is the library! Homestead is adding books from many different dimensions—all of which have interesting and exhilarating features! Some books will scream if you get too close to them, so make sure to bring earplugs. Remember, the library is a place for quiet study time! Other books will try to bite your fingers, and if you're not careful, one may succeed and suck you inside where you'll be trapped within the pages until you manage to coax someone over to take your place.

Those who find it difficult to motivate themselves to finish a full book will be pleased to hear that some novels come enchanted with a spell that leaves you paralyzed until you've read the entire thing! These books will surely be useful when you're writing an essay.
All of these wonderful books can be checked out from our new library, so keep an eye out for when it opens! And beware of the bookworms…

9 Many students have complained of struggling in their business classes; thus, Homestead took a page out of Planet C1284kb5's book to make these classes more engaging! When entering the new business hallway, be ready to buy and sell! Students will be met with an underground cave-looking market fllled with goblin goods. From glistening golden armor to crystalline phoenixes, students will have the opportunity to buy many different wares from alternate dimensions. Don't be fooled by the gallantry of it all: this is still a learning experience. You either learn how to barter or are trapped forever.

10 Students will be pleased to learn that study hall hasn't been changed much. Now students will be chained into medieval stocks to ensure that every student is using this study period for its intended purpose.

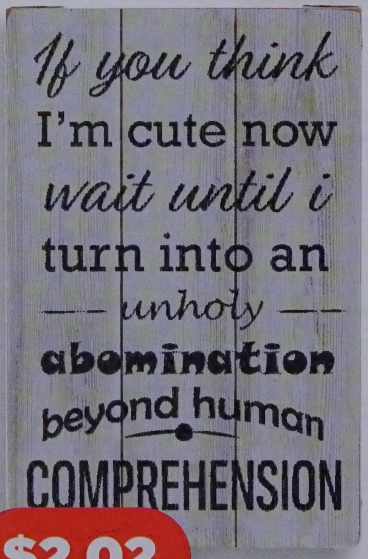
A Chemistry, Math Resource
B Darkroom
C Study Hall
D Culinary
E Business
F Career and technical
G Broadcast Media
H Office/Demon Nest
I Guidance
J Media center
K Cafeteria
L Ball Pits
M Auditorium
N PE
O Natatorium

LOBBY LOBBY

designed by
THOMAS HILL AND AZALEA ORSINI

$22.99

$16.23

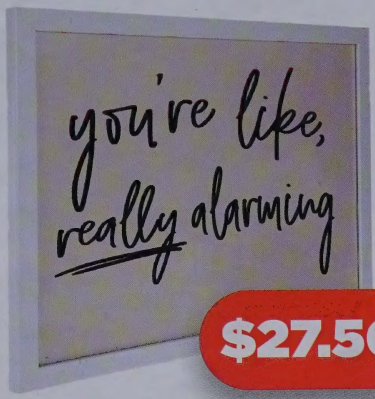


$2.02

OUR UGLIEST SIGNS

20% OFF

PARODY



$27.50

$11.11

1 Campaign Donation

FOOD BLOG nopody reads

ghostwritten and designed by
AZALEA ORSINI

PARODY

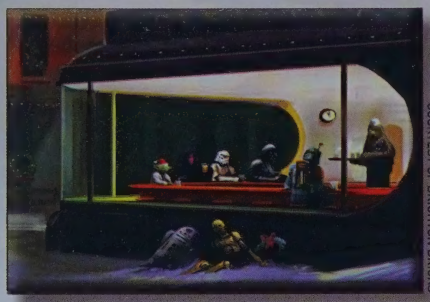
Simple Green Smoothie

Green smoothies may seem daunting to make, but they're an easy way to incorporate more nutrients and multivitamins into your diet! Before I get into this recipe (which is seriously super easy), here's the short story of where I got it. This recipe came to me in a dream, in which I was deep in the Sahara, and six sandstone statues circled around me, scrutinizing me with their intense, vicious-looking faces. How was I supposed to get out? I felt trapped and consumed by their glares. Slowly, they were getting closer, surrounding me and ready to scald me with their intensely fiery stone bodies. Suddenly, chunks of sandstone fly across the arid, sandy landscape. The sound of explosions fills the hot air. From the dust, a masked figure approached me. "Are you alright?" she asks. I'm not sure how to respond. I don't know how to process the events that had just transpired. Her voice sounded familiar, like somebody I knew in another life. "Who.. are you?" I managed to mumble. The mysterious woman didn't respond, but I could sense that a smile had formed under her heavy-duty gas mask. After a few moments of silence, she decided to lift her mask up. That's when I saw her: Oprah Winfrey. Her eyes shined in the blazing desert sun, giving me the knowledge that I needed to create this smoothie. I woke up in a cold sweat. You're probably wondering what provoked this dream—if you believe that dreams have meaning. I think it's an odd debate, honestly. Asking if dreams have meaning is the same as asking if thoughts have meaning—it's just not something we can truly answer. Anyway, I like to think of myself as the typical Midwestern mom. I'm occupied with my job in human resources, taking care of my kids and doing pilates courses; why would I be dreaming of the Moroccan desert? Do I yearn for a life of exploration, camels and vaguely Arabic movie soundtrack music, or is the symbolism behind my dream something deeper? Here's my working theory: the desert was a symbol of life without satisfaction, and the need for something more that requires taking a treacherous path. Those demonic statues were a representation of my dark, brooding past, which I'm very private about. I like to think I'm a very private person, I just don't like to share things with strangers; there's something uncomfortable about it. Anyway, I think Oprah was a symbol of my desire to change my habits, knowing that they're bad for me but the indulgence consumes me. That's what really inspired me to take this smoothie thing seriously. When I moved to Saint Paul with my mother and kids, I really found my niche. Something about smoothies fills me with a certain joy that no person, ani have never been able to give me. Anyway, after that short introduction, here's what you'll need:

Recipe

I don't know, Google it! Do you think I have time to give YOU a recipe? I'm clearly busy running a blog!

PAR·O·DY GALLERY


COURTESY OF BRIGHTON BRICKS

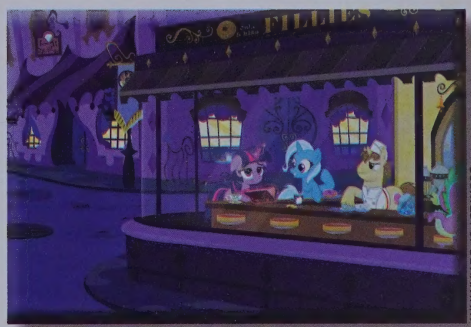
Nighthawks (*Star Wars* parody)

COURTESY OF ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

Nighthawks (original) by Edward Hopper

COURTESY OF ETSY

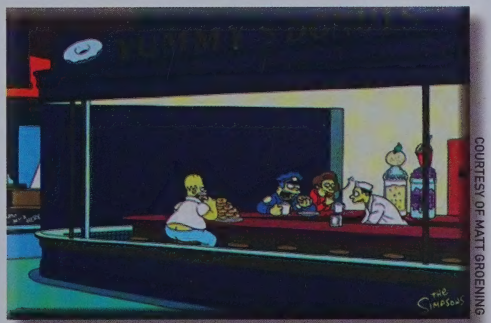
Brickhawks (Lego parody)


COURTESY OF DEVIANTART

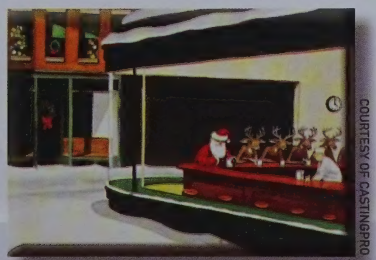
NightMares (*My Little Pony* parody)

COURTESY OF MICHAEL GODDARD

The Place We Remember by Michael Goddard (Disney parody)


COURTESY OF MATT GROENING

Nighthogs at the Diner (With Deep Apologies to Edward Hopper) by Matt Groening (*The Simpsons* parody)


COURTESY OF CASTINGPRO

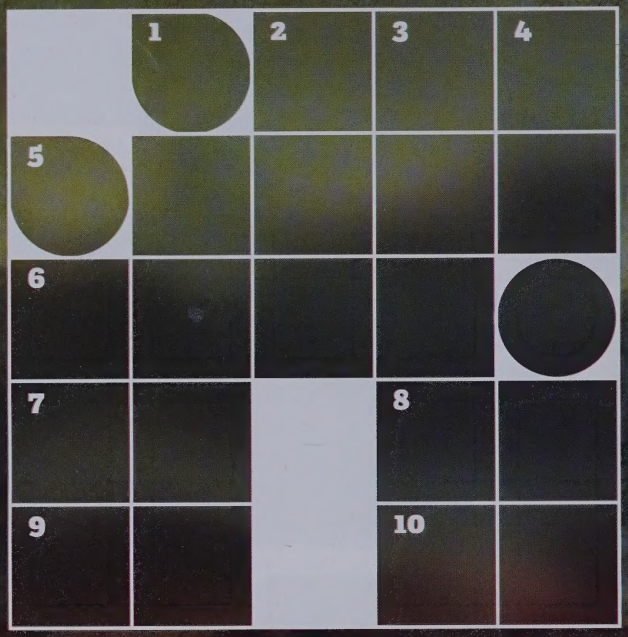
Santa Café by Hudson Talbot

COURTESY OF BANKSY

Anteater

Spooftana Crossword

April • 2023



First, solve the mini crossword on each page. Then, unscramble the letters placed inside the circular boxes in the space on the other side.

Across:

1. ____ Cop: 1987, Sci-fi/Action satirical film on greedy corporations and crime
5. Currency in France and Italy
6. ____ Club: 1999, satirical thriller critique of consumer capitalism
7. The key on your keyboard to increase brightness
8. Get someone's attention; "Hey you!"
9. A boat's first name, maybe
10. Pending acceptance, abbreviated

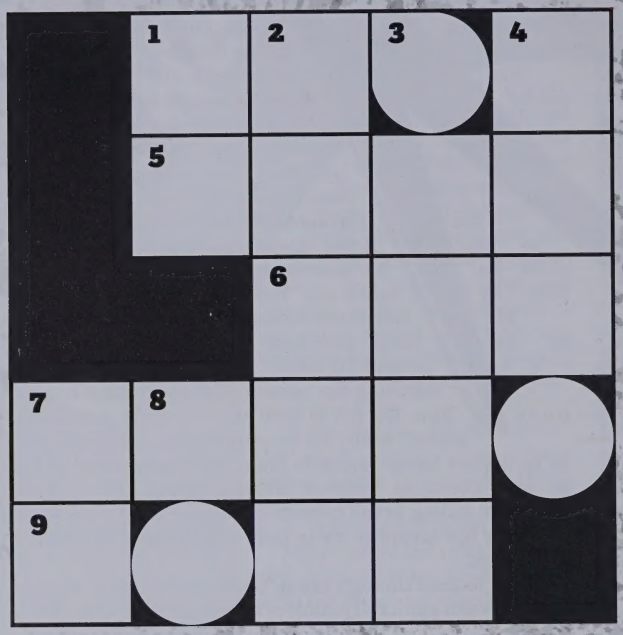
Down:

1. Destroys or what has been destroyed
2. Similar to "inc"
3. Socially unconventional life-stylers, slangily
4. Spend a Roman holiday in this port city on the Tyrrhenian Sea
5. F, but plural

created by
NATHAN WISENER
designed by Azalea Orsini

Spooftana Crossword

April • 2023



First, solve the mini crossword on each page. Then, unscramble the letters placed inside the circular boxes in the space at the bottom of the page.

Across:

❶ ____ron: COVID-19 Variant and 15th Greek letter

❺ Zero, zilch

❻ Baby louse

❼ Waves away

❾ Animal ____: George Orwell's 1945 satire about communism

Down:

❶ A light switch in the up position

❷ The farm in 9 Across

❸ E.G, rain cats and dogs, see the light

❹ ____ Cradle: 1963, Kurt Vonnegut's postmodern satire about the modern man

❼ Book or movie genre with aliens and imaginary science: shortened

❽ Succinct amusement

Unscramble:

Hint:
This side up!

always pick the seat in the back near an exit and a window, but the seat and the surrounding seats had already been picked. Lucas fought a scowl as he surveyed the room for the next best seat. He checked his supplies to see if his pencils were sharp enough to be effective weapons before a loud crash startled the classroom.

The children all dropped to the floor and hid underneath their desks. A sweet voice attempted to calm the chaos, the teacher stammering apologetically.

"It was just me, children. I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to startle you like that."

Lucas looked around skeptically, seeing the wide, panicked eyes of the other children darting around as well. He was confident that everyone he had encountered thus far knew the risks of being in monster territory. Lucas figured that it would only be so long before monsters were mentioned due to the growing frequency of attacks.

Like any true kindergartner, Lucas tuned the teacher out and spent most of the day surveying his classmates and sorting them into different categories: useful, not useful, and monster bait. He felt bad for the children in the last category, but if there was to be a monster attack, they would be the most likely to go.

As the school day seemed to be winding to a close, Lucas could see the teacher getting anxious as she explained emergency procedures for which Lucas did not care. He squinted his eyes and raised his hand.

"I'd like to go to the bathroom."

The teacher glanced at the clock and back to Lucas. "Right now? You need to know Alice's recommended procedures in case of—"

"A monster attack?" he interrupted and scoffed. "I can handle myself."

The teacher looked puzzled, but didn't want to argue as she sighed, saying, "At least take a buddy with you."

Lucas glanced around the room and picked one of the children he had deemed 'not useful' before beckoning the other boy to follow him. Silently, they walked down the hallway to the bathroom. Soon after Lucas and the other boy entered, however, they heard hushed voices speaking outside.

"I saw two go in here," a voice said, "so I'll check it out."

Lucas could hear the figure creep quietly into the bathroom. He quickly pushed the other boy into the stall next to him and motioned for him to stand on top of the toilet seat and to stay quiet. He let his instincts and training take over as he rushed to the next stall, holding his breath and trying to steady his beating heart. Monsters, he had been taught, will hunt you down if they know where you are.

"There are no feet under these stalls. We're clear to begin." Lucas could hear the figure walk out calmly, leaving him hesitant to leave in case it was a trap so he would let down his guard.

He was beginning to feel as though he would be spared from a monster attack when he heard an announcement over the loud speaker. His heart was beating too loudly to make any sense of the words as they sounded as though they were being broadcast underwater. Lucas and tried to calm himself and return his mind to a state of peace and confidence that he was prepared to survive any monster attack, but he found himself paralyzed at the thought.

"Are we going to die?" a meek voice asked from within the bathroom.

Lucas thought for a moment before replying, "You might, but I'm not going down without a fight." He wasn't sure if he believed himself.

He ran out of the bathroom, not bothering to see if the other kid would follow him. He could feel his heartbeat down to his toes as a voice close by called out, "Hey! There's one over here!"

He ran at the monster and grabbed the device in its hand, smashing the walkie-talkie against the ground. He kicked its legs as hard as he could, watching the monster crumble before it could hurt him. He felt a rush of adrenaline and looked around wildly for the monster he could reach next as he dodged hands trying to grab and subdue him. He felt his body freeze up, however, when he heard the cry of his classmate falling to the ground. Lucas turned in time to see the other boy scramble away from a monster with its hand outreached.

Ideas flashed through Lucas' mind, but all he could come up with was a panicked jumble of incoherent thoughts. There was no way out of the school that wouldn't have monsters around every corner, or at least people unable to help against the monsters.

In one last miserable attempt, Lucas threw himself down in front of his fallen classmate, desperate to have at least one survivor between the two of them. He begged the monsters looming over him, "Please don't hurt us. Let us go. Please. I wasn't trained enough for today. I wasn't ready for this. There are too many monsters."

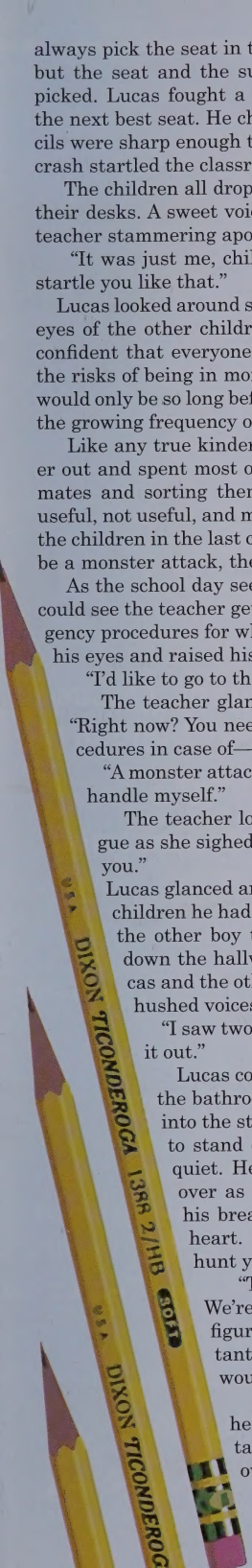
Lucas could imagine the disappointed stares of his father and mother as they would look over his corpse later, shaking their heads at all the time wasted preparing their son. Lucas blinked to try and clear his eyes of the tears forming, only to come face-to-face with one of the monsters holding a walkie talkie.

The face frowned at him before taking a step back. "Trained?" a voice, clearly adult, rang out. "Monsters?" The strange man glanced around before worriedly blinking at Lucas. "This is just a drill in case of an emergency. There's no real threat of a school shooter here, or anywhere else, really."

Lucas shook his head in disbelief.

The strange man sighed, "It's highly unlikely you would ever need to put into action what we're teaching you kids in these drills, so you don't need to worry about it. Now, let's get you back to class."

But Lucas knew better. He knew that no one ever expects to be a victim of the monsters until it is too late.



GRAPHICS COURTESY OF ADOBE STOCK, NICEPNG, TICONDEROGA, POSTERAZZI

ALL THE WORLD'S MONSTERS

written by ELISE PECKINPAUGH
designed by Madeline Phuong

SATIRE

Darting through the woods, Lucas could feel leaves and branches give way as he forced himself through the brush. Sticks snapped underneath his feet as he looked for a tree with branches low enough for him to climb, only to see none around. His time was expiring; his heart began beating louder than the sticks still breaking beneath him.

"I can still see you. You're out." Instructor Alice's voice almost caused Lucas to jump as it cut through the air. "Next time," she said, "wear darker colors."

Lucas heard the tell-tale sound of a paintball being fired from beyond the trees and wasn't shocked to see a splatter of red on his chest as he flinched from the pain.

"Are you even taking this seriously?" Lucas' father emerged from the direction of the shot, shaking his head. "It feels like your heart isn't into this. Do you know how important this is for your future?"

Lucas hung his head in shame. "I know, and I was trying!" He could hear the whining tone in his voice. "I promise I'm ready to go out there!! Please?"

Silence was the only answer he received as his father turned around and walked back into the house.

Lucas sat down, thinking. He needed to be back in the house before it got dark or his mother would come find him, and his self-defense training for the day would be brutal. He shuddered thinking about the torture she put him through the last time he stayed out too late.

Without a word, Lucas untied his shoes and made his way to the table where his parents waited for him. They didn't even glance at him as they fully immersed themselves in the television a few feet away.

"Another monster has been caught," his mother's monotone voice cut through the silence, "but how many more untrained civilians are going to put themselves out there? They're unprepared for the situations they're placing themselves in."

The rest of the night was more of the same, filled with impromptu practice as Lucas's parents had a habit of interrupting his free time with surprise drills that Alice had recommended so that Lucas would be prepared for an ambush.

Lucas focused his mind on the singular goal he had been taught by his parents from the moment he could understand: survive.

When the day finally came for Lucas to leave his parents' nest, his father sent him off with one last warning: "No matter how much we throw at you, you will never be prepared enough. School is a dangerous place where monsters roam freely, searching for their next unsuspecting victim."

Lucas nodded his head solemnly, not truly understanding his father's warning.

Immediately after arriving at school, he took in his surroundings as he scanned the other children. He tried to appear collected, but he couldn't help jerking his head around to try and shake the feeling of being watched. He could tell he wasn't the only child shaken by Alice's and parents' warnings of the danger they were in.

Lucas kept his wits about him as he made his way to his classroom. Alice had drilled into him to

I would see kids ask for a Mr. Potato Head and get Play-Doh. Inequality was rife."

He took a breath, checked his Rolex Datejust, and resumed.

"You know, my parents wanted me to be a doctor. Or a lawyer. When I decided to run for my first local race, they barely even supported me. My dad only took money out of his retirement account to fund my campaign. What could $50,000 do in 1973? The sum just barely got me by. Don't even get me started on my congressional campaign."

After a couple of minutes of small talk and walking through the crowded D.C. streets, I find it hard to ignore row after row of homeless people lining the commercial district.

"I love coming here to remind myself of the most vulnerable in our community, Maggie. They're the lowest of the low in the eyes of our society and deserve better. Wait right here for a bit."

The congressman walked into the unmarked building, greeting people I could only assume were the owners with a gleeful smile. All that I could see was his muddled reflection through the frosted glass as soon as the door closed. After three minutes, he came back with a stray cat in his hands, the animal already shedding its fur on the congressman's navy blue jacket.

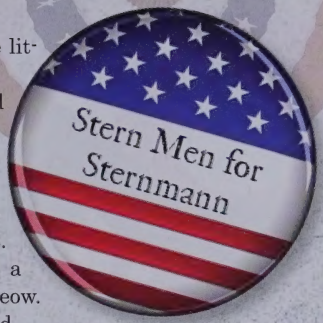
"People just don't do enough for them anymore," He said looking down at the Russian Blue.

"It's devastating. They're left on the fringes of society and no one bats an eye. It's absolutely disgusting."

We didn't get very far before the cat began to urinate in the congressman's hands.

"You know, I'll just plop the little guy right here."

As soon as it touched the ground, it ran amuck. Against the wave of foot traffic. Against the wave of actual traffic. Against the horizon of the human eye. A minute later, we heard a thump and a shrieking meow. The politician's eyes widened.



"You have another question ready?" He asked tensely.

Flipping through my notepad I replied, "Um, sure. Could you explain the goal of your newest bill, Bill H.R 3420, in the simplest terms?"

He stopped and scrunched his eyebrows, directing his confusion at the sky, which had no chandeliers to greet him with. He got out his phone and started typing.

"To be honest, I haven't written one of those things since I was a freshman in Congress." His eyes darted across the screen.

"Oh! Right here." He squinted. "It's about banning all school libraries. Great stuff, really. Teachers don't know what they're doing. They have to fit an impossible amount of curriculum into nine months and if they can't cover a subject, the curious students flock to the library to read all about it. Who knows what those books are even about?"

I didn't know what to say.

"Senator, two questions. One, didn't you write a book yourself? And two, do you think you know how to do a teacher's job better than them?"

"What a stupid question. I told you I hadn't written anything since my term in the 92nd Congress! It's all ghostwritten. You could've looked that up, you know. And of course I know a teacher's job better than them. Why else am I in charge of drafting up laws for the entire United States? People trust me. I just don't trust teachers. They always punished me for not doing my own work. Yet they say 'work smarter, not harder.' Yeah right."

I try to keep sane as we stroll past the boulevard into the glittering streetlamps.

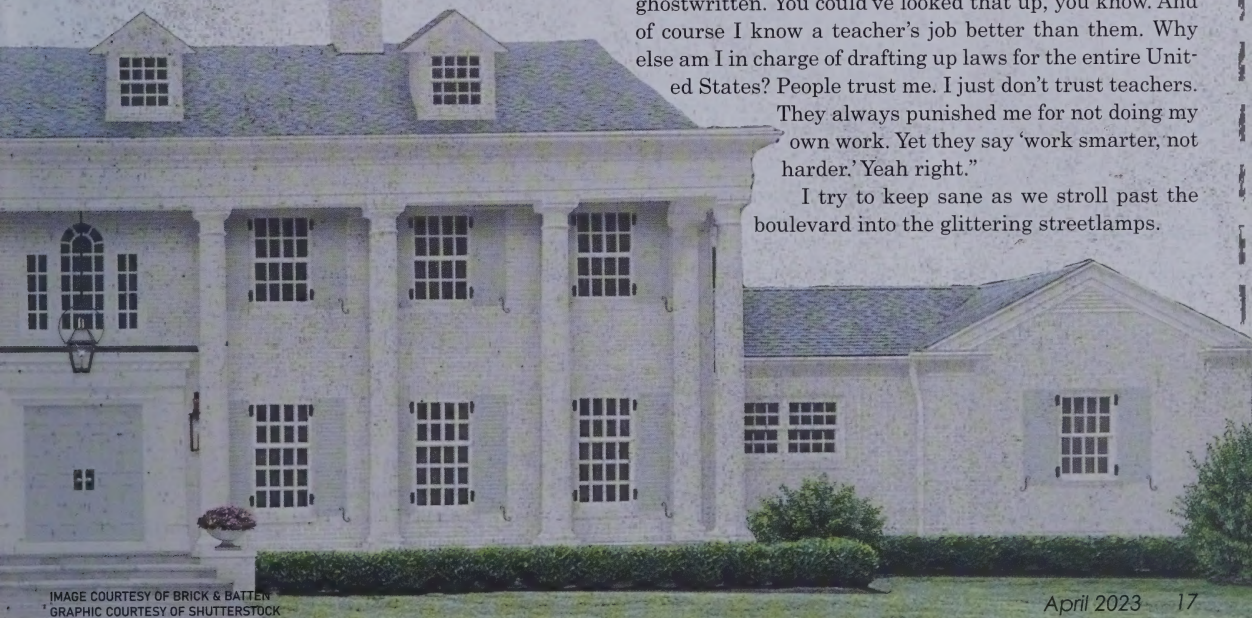


IMAGE COURTESY OF BRICK & BATTEN
GRAPHIC COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK

Politics at Its Finest

written by
MICHELLE OBIOMA
designed by Madeline Phuong

SATIRE

When I touched down in D.C., he had already sent a shuttle to the airport en route to his house. It was a flashy Mercedes Benz with the heaviest window tint I'd ever seen. Before I got even more lost in the mirrors, I darted my head left to see the chauffeur standing attentively outside the car door, waiting for the supposed journalist who had flown in to cover Arizona's own Ronny Sternmann.

Sternmann welcomed me into a house that could only be categorized as "too big for a U.S. Congressperson" and shook my hand. He had a politician's handshake. Strong and sturdy. I thought we had talked on the email before I flew out, (nothing more than surface-level work emails), but as I walked into his house, I spotted a live-in secretary typing away behind a monitor. If all of those emails "from" Sternmann were typed up by her, I guess I'll start with a clean slate. Walking past the in-house pianist, florist, and maid, he lead me to the pavilion placed in the center of his backyard and surrounded by beautiful foliage. I sat down on the uncomfortable wire-frame chair and began to type.

The Stolidus Journal sat down with Ronny Sternmann, the 83-year-old incumbent from Arizona's 3rd District to learn more about the man behind the campaign and the most recent bill he's proposed in the House.

"You gettin' anywhere on that?" Sternmann scoffed. I had recently been assigned to profile Congressman Sternmann and his extensive career in politics, namely his fifty years in Congress, not counting his local political ventures.

"I want this to be an accurate portrayal of the impact I've had since I've been in office, Margret. I know it's hard to summarize sixty years in office, but I know you can Maggie. Wait, am I allowed to call you that?" He chuckled. "Or will you have to call HR and try to #MeToo me? I know how sneaky your generation can be."

I managed to put on a half-hearted smile, starting to count down the days I had left.

"Maggie's okay, sir. I have a couple of questions for you today and we can resume tomorrow. First things first, why'd you get into politics?"

He interlocked his fingers and looked up at the glass chandelier hanging above us.

"Melinda! Glass of water, please!"

We both glanced at the arched doorway to see a petite maid dart across the yard to meet us at the haughty pavilion. She had brought two glasses.

"Place them here, Lindy. Wow, look at how attentive she is! How did she know I was extra thirsty?"

He raised the glistening glass and downed the whole thing. He then went off to finish glass number two.

"Okay," I let out after a forced chuckle, "Let's get back to the question. What made you go into politics?"

"Right." He writhed in his seat. "As a child, I saw injustice everywhere I looked. I grew up basically impoverished. Upper-middle class. At Christmas,

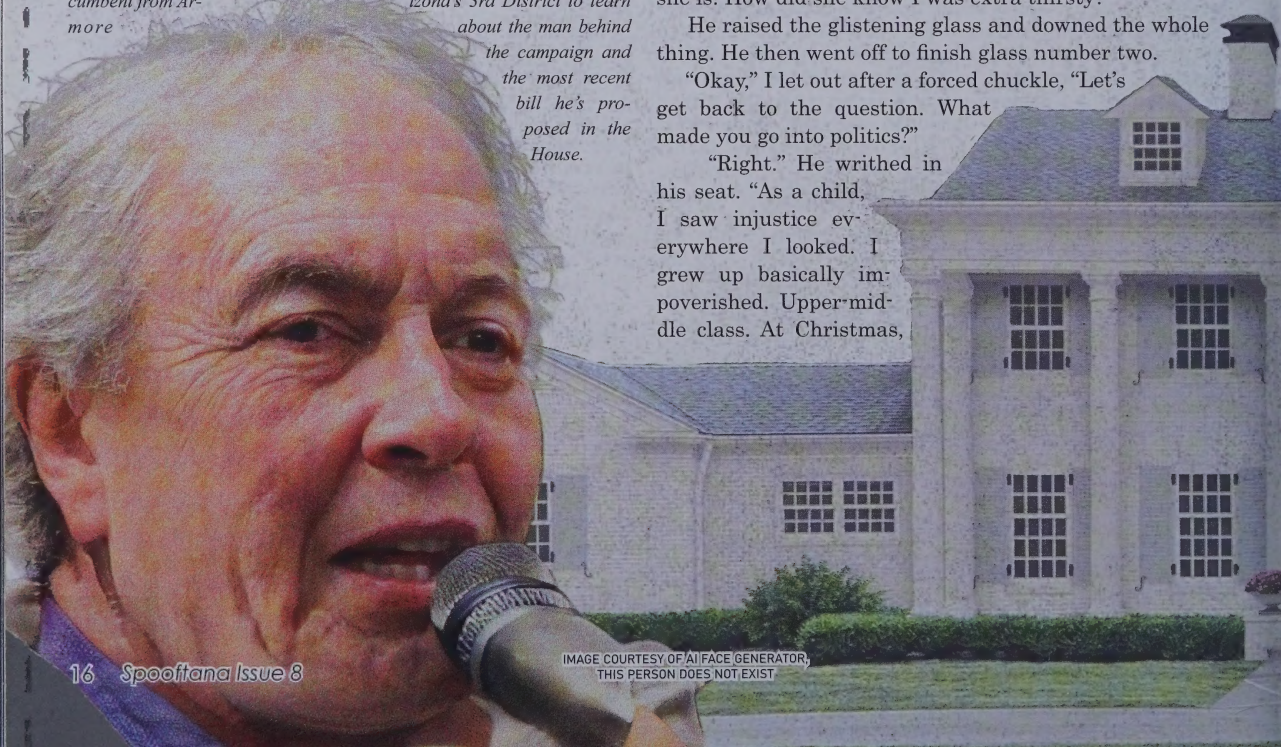


IMAGE COURTESY OF AI FACE GENERATOR, THIS PERSON DOES NOT EXIST

of First World children—emaciated, abandoned, and crowding toward Third World humanitarians handing out provisions—appear from multiple angles, faces and limbs indistinguishable from one another in the chaos.

[V.O.]
With your help, we can save the First World, ruined by its own wasteful actions centuries ago.

White text fades in and out over video clips of the children in sync with the voiceover.

[V.O.]
A mere $10,000 provides a First World child with transport to and care in the Third World.

As if the Third World doesn't have enough of its own problems, the man thinks, rolling his eyes at the 1-800 number and "DONATE NOW!" flashing in a garish yellow. The text just barely stands out against the varied shots of children clothed in bright, polyester remnants of First World brands, brands that had long ago relocated to the Third World and have since distanced themselves from the public relations nightmare of the First World. The PA system flashes and blares: time for waste removal.

Fishing for another remote beneath the stacks of papers and piles of trash on the floor, the man activates his iClean X system, whose Swift Sweep, Soak and Set™ formula guarantees a superb six-minute clean or your money back. In just under five minutes, everything from the crumpled packaging of the man's past meals to his household carbon emissions are pristinely sealed into space-safe containers and ready for the weekly global waste transport to the First World.

There had been public resistance to this waste removal process initially. Third World activists attempted to preserve the spoiled remains of the First World biosphere to no avail. How else could the Third World be expected to better itself? The waste had to go somewhere. What better place than a doomed world with no chance of saving itself? There are plenty more planets left to be used for future settlement; one planet of thousands, even millions, is but a small sacrifice. As with all discussions when it came this matter, the man tended to agree with the words of the Third World CEO: "Advancement comes at a cost. We cannot be expected to pay it, but someone must."

CUT TO:

3 EXT. VILLAGE - COLLAGE OF PORTRAIT STILLS OF FIRST WORLD CHILDREN

Screen fills with individual portraits of First World children, glistening eyes the only signs of life amid faces hollowed and dirtied.

[V.O.]
Over 420 million children in the First World depend on us. Give $10,000, give hope.

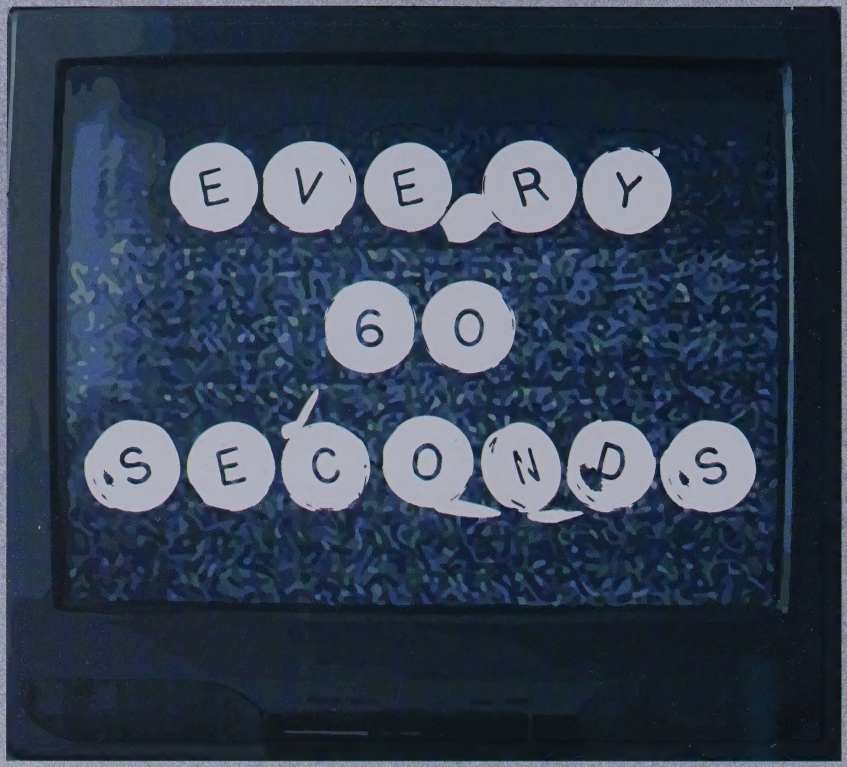
Feeling assaulted by the onslaught of statistics, the man raises his arm in a tired motion to be repeated tens of thousands of times more yet—remote in hand, finger hovering over the worn buttons—and changes the channel.

He sees an actor from his favorite detective TV show advertising the newest Model ~~AE~~ Tesla, and unmutes the television set. He settles back further into his armchair. In the distance, the distinct buzzing sound of the Waste-PikupBot™ can faintly be heard compressing and gathering the waste to be shipped to First World disposal sites.

OVER BLACK:
"Paid for by Friends of the First World, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, ©2323"

"DISCLAIMER: TRANSPORT FROM FIRST WORLD TO THIRD WORLD CONSISTS OF EXTRA STORAGE SPACE ON RETURNING GLOBAL WASTE TRANSPORT SHIPMENTS. FRIENDS OF THE FIRST WORLD CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR INJURIES OR DEATHS OF SPONSORED FIRST WORLD CHILDREN BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER TRANSPORT AND CARE. SPONSORSHIP OF FIRST WORLD CHILDREN PROVIDES ONLY ONE YEAR OF CARE, INCLUDING FOOD, SHELTER AND ONE HOUR OF DAILY EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION. AFTER THE ONE YEAR TIME PERIOD FOR CARE ENDS, EX-SPONSORED CHILDREN MAY EARN CARE FROM FRIENDS OF THE FIRST WORLD THROUGH TEN HOURS OF DAILY LABOR, MEAL BREAKS NOT INCLUDED."

Global waste transport containers



written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

The man awakens blearily to the murmur of his television set, placed so near the armchair that the static prickles his reclined feet. Just above, the PA system reminds inhabitants of the Third World (formerly Mars) to always don protective gear or else remain inside a sealed enclosure before stepping out into the planet's thin atmosphere. The latest issues of *Natural Profit* and *New Planet, New You* litter the floor, shifting as the man stretches and repositions himself in his chair. He grapples for the remote in the cushion's crumb-filled crevices.

The History Channel has just finished showing its annual documentary on mankind's exodus from the First World (formerly Earth) by the millions, following the 22nd-century migration to the temporary Second World space station and humanity's progress toward permanent settlement on the Third World in the 23rd century. All the while, millions were left behind on the First World. An ad break begins, filling the air time before the next History Channel program, "Making the Most of a Dying Planet: Adventures in the First World."

OVER BLACK:
White text appears on screen in sync with the voiceover.

[V.O.]
Every 60 seconds, a child is born into extreme poverty and climate inequality.

Voiceover continues as black screen fades out.

[V.O.]
Nowhere is this situation worse than in countries of the First World.

FADE IN:

1 EXT. LANDSCAPE - DRONE FOOTAGE
Lyrical piano music plays. Bird's eye view of withered rows of grain, rustling dryly among visible waves of heat. In the distance, pillars of smoke rise from treetops and suffocate the sky. Pan to skylines submerged in the rising tides of an acidic ocean.

The remote finds its way into the man's hand. Holding it up in victory, he mutes the television with a vicious finality. The man swivels in his seat to reach for his tablet, eager to see what menu of freeze-dried meals the Third World will be distributing for the day. On screen, a First World child, only months old and burnt by harsh sun and chemical exposure, open its mouth in a silent wail.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. VILLAGE - HANDHELD CAMERA FOOTAGE, SLIGHTLY SHAKY TO GIVE APPEARANCE OF REMOTENESS
Lyrical piano music swells. Shots of herds

IMAGES COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK & GETTY IMAGES

Monologues of A Soccer Mom

written and designed by
HANNAH SHAW

The following is a series of voicemails left by Melissa, a stay-at-home mother of three: Michael, Anthony, and Grace. Melissa has lived in the same home, a roomy three-story which her husband Brian recently renovated, for the past eleven years. The first floor is a matching shade of off-white and the furniture throughout has shifted into a more "minimalist" feel.

Michael is eleven years old; he got into soccer when Melissa enrolled him in a club for infants at eight months old. Anthony is nine; he enjoys Legos and is involved in a competitive lego building league that meets daily for four hours. Grace is six and was pulled out of school in first grade to pursue ballet.

September 17th, 2:16pm
Hey Heather! It's Melissa, long time no see! Ha ha! It was so good to see you yesterday, it really is a shame that we don't get to see one another more often! I know it's hard with the kids and all—congrats on number three by the way! Welcome to the club! Well anyways, I just wanted to call and see how you were doing. Give me a call back when you get the chance. Buh-bye.

September 19th, 1:21pm
Hey, hon. I was hoping you could pick up Michael from practice today. Christy and I agreed to a coffee date with Shannon, the woman who just moved in a few houses down. She's the one with the two kids, and the one boy skates in the street without a helmet on. I was thinking of bringing that up today, I don't want Michael and Anthony seeing him and getting any ideas. Anyway, his practice ends at 4:30, you can pick him up from the clubhouse, it'll be to your right as soon as you turn into the parking lot. Bring a water bottle—the green one, he won't drink out of the blue one, he says it makes his water taste funny—and a snack, preferably one of those fat and sugar free seeds and vegetable bars. See you at home; I should be back around 5.

September 22nd, 8:24am
Hey Shannon, looks like I just missed your call! What a shame...I had a really great time the other day. I'm sure you'll settle into the neighborhood just fine. I agree that a carpooling system for practice would be a great idea. I think for games I'll drive Michael; he plays best when he has at least fifteen minutes of quiet time before the game and I wouldn't want to jeopardize the team! Let me know if you or Scott need anything; Brian and I are always just a knock on the door away. Buh-bye.

September 30th, 3:45pm
Hey Madison, it's Mrs. Hall from down the street, your mom gave me your number. Brian and I are going out next Thursday and I was hoping you could watch the kids for a few hours. We're planning on leaving at 6 and getting back by 11. We don't get out much so it might go a little over depending on how the night goes. Give me a call back if you're interested so I can lay out the ground rules and such.

October 3rd, 12:04pm
Hey Meredith! It's Melissa. I just wanted to let you know something I heard Dylan say to Anthony while he was over here last night. He told Anthony that he was going to be something called "Ghostface" for Halloween this year? I looked it up and it really doesn't seem appropriate for his age. Of course, you clearly had no idea so I just wanted to let you know. It's important to nip that kind of stuff in the bud! Anyways, let me know if you want to set up another playdate for the boys. Dylan seems to really look up to Anthony, it's very sweet. Buh-bye.

October 7th, 5:47pm
Hey Heather, it's Melissa, sorry I missed ya. I just listened to your message and I completely agree. Meredith doesn't seem to keep a very good eye on Dylan or Ava. Brian said that Ava posted a picture on her social media account of herself in a swimsuit. The last thing I want to see when I open my phone is a teenager in a skimpy little outfit. It kind of figures though; did you see the horrible Ghostface costume she bought Dylan for Halloween this year?! It's disappointing, I thought Anthony and Dylan were really getting along but I'd rather not have his brain corrupted. Call me when you get the chance, buh-bye.

October 9th, 1:38pm
Hey Madison, I am so glad you're available this weekend. I wanted to let you know about a little change of rules in our house. Michael is grounded so he can't have his tablet, phone, PlayStation, Xbox, Ninentendo Switch or hoverboard. We told him this morning so he might be a little rowdy tomorrow about trying to get them back, you can just go ahead and hide them in the left hand cabinet in the basement. It's the one with the child lock. Oh and Anthony seems to have developed a hitting problem. If he gets violent with his siblings you can just try to get in between them, he should calm down after a few minutes. Thanks again for all your help! I was thinking five dollars an hour would be okay? And feel free to help yourself to my green smoothie!

October 11th, 11:13am
Hey Heather. Wanted to let you know that the detox tea you gave me yesterday worked! Weighed myself this morning and I am officially down three pounds! Remind me again where you got it? Fresh Market? I bet it was Fresh Market. Anyways, I wonder if Grace would like it. She looks a little big for a ballerina—not that she needs to lose weight and I would never say that to her face. But she might benefit from dropping a few; might help her fit in more with her dance class. I'll see you at this weekend's game! Buh-bye.

October 13th, 2:34pm
Hey babe. Yes, you're good to put the glass tupperware in the microwave. And I know those frozen peas are in there somewhere... check the upper left corner, under the frozen gyoza dumplings. As for the laundry, turn the washing machine onto the cool setting with the dial on the right side if you're going to throw the sheets in there but other than that the regular detergent works just fine. If you're worried about ruining the sheets you can just leave it for me when I get home. I'll see you around 7. Love you, bye.

October 21st, 6:28pm
Hey Meredith! Thank you so much for the dinner last night. Let me know if you want that recipe for turkey. It's hard to get it right so I understand why you struggled with it. Your children really are such a joy. Let's plan something soon, okay? Buh-bye.

October 30th, 12:34pm
Hey hon. Would you mind stopping by the grocery store on the way home to grab some of those sugar free candy rings for tomorrow night? I hate the idea of the kids having so much sugar in the house. And please do not buy the blue ones again. They have that chemical dye in it and I would prefer our children to have functioning brains. Love you.

GRAPHICS COURTESY OF WALLQOUTES.COM & ISTOCK

TICKET MASTER V. TAYLOR SWIFT

The controversy continues.

written and designed by
STELLA GRABLE

Mid-last year, discourse surrounding famous pop singer Taylor Swift and Ticketmaster, the largest distributor of concert tickets in the nation, swept through the media.

Swift was appalled when during her "Eras Tour," her fans were unable to buy tickets due to Live Nations- the parent company of Ticketmaster- being overriden by bots and in consequence, being unable to keep up with the demand.

If you're not an avid music enthusiast and have never bought a concert ticket, you may be asking "Stella, why would bots want to corrupt the system?" Well, these bots are known as "scalpers" in the concert world. Scalpers' aim to use online bot programs to get to ticket sales as early as possible in order to buy as many tickets as possible. This then allows scalpers to corner the market of desired tickets and jack-up the prices to desperate? fans. Sometimes, scalpers will sell their tickets online, other times, they will bombard concert-goers with horrible prices right at the gates.

Swift was absolutely in shock that Ticketmaster would allow scalpers at all, claiming that these bots have "too much control over this coveted industry" that is her "livelihood."

These statements seem valid and all, but with the new information that has leaked surrounding the issue, Swifts validity can be thrown through the already broken window.

Recently, president of Live Nation, Joe Berchtold, commented on the situation at a crowded press conference on March 5, 2023. A large audience surrounded him, all wondering the same thing: "Why bring up old news?" As he stood on the podium of Live Nations headquarters in Denver, sweating up a storm, and obviously in distress, the tension from greedy reporters and waiting fans was palpable.

"I have something to confess," Berchtold started, immediately creating a commotion within the crowd. "Late September 2021, Live Nation let go of the previous president of Ticketmaster. We felt the company needed new leadership, a new perspective from someone with unique experiences. We, as Live Nation, want to uphold the best practices for our customers, as well as artists. And so, when we needed a new leader for our offshoot company, we decided to higher someone who worked within the industry and knows the ins and outs. So, under a document of secrecy which has now since expired, we hired Miss Taylor Swift to be the new CEO of Ticketmaster."

A shock went through the crowd, and immediately after this statemnt Berchtold resigned,

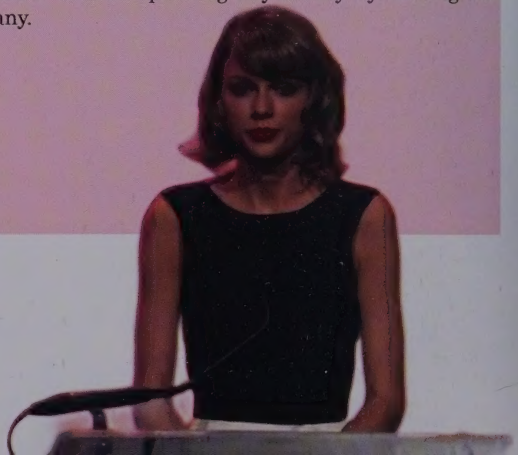
Swift has been on a sturdy hiatus since Berchtold's confession, unwilling to comment on her current status with the company.

However, Ticketmaster employees have since expressed their concerns, and several whistleblowers have come forth to unveil the truths of high ticket prices.

To begin, about 3% of the ticket is sales tax(makes sense). But those "fees" that Ticketmaster tells you about, which take up about 30% of the total ticket price, is much more complicated. 10% is said to be for "shipping and handling." For an online ticket? And the other 20%, goes to Swift, who uses that money to buy her employees' uniforms, which consist of classic jeans and a blue and white cardigan, according to one past employee.

Next, a whopping 50% goes straight to Swift and her team (team meaning her cats). This leaves about 27% to be the actual ticket price.

Additionally, those scalpers who Swift detested actually belong to Swift herself. And the scalpers who buy Taylor Swift tickets never sell the tickets, which seems unusual, but Swift stated to a close friend that she is "afraid of crowds" and decided to combat that by keeping tickets for herself without spending any money by owning the company.



A Return to Principle

written by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN
designed by Madeline Phuong

An unfortunate sight to behold in our grand old country is a most depressing state of affairs. Within the timespan of a business week, another political pundit earns their wings after arguing that the poor do not deserve basic necessities to survive in an inflation-ridden world, another failure to compromise between the two polarized parties occurs and another angry uncle makes a fiery post after consuming a steady diet of misinformation. Russia has infiltrated our Facebook feeds, our government, and our hearts. America, unfortunately, stands divided and is on the brink of another civil war. Some American citizens have expressed an interest in seceding, and I fear that our government may follow in those footsteps.

People are admitting that the United States of America has a grave problem and our grand institutions are crumbling under the weight. I fear that two, three, or even five days down the line, in place of a White House and Capitol Building, we will find a pile of burnt ash and smoldering embers with Russia, China, and all our foreign enemies toasting marshmallows and adding logs to keep themselves warm in the ensuing nuclear winter.

Many have come to the conclusion that change is needed, and I am inclined to agree. Some say that we should raise wages so those in the lower tax brackets can stave off power-hungry corporate landlords and refill the necessary medications, and properly regulate private companies that feed off of hatred. These well-meaning, but naive citizens do not understand that addressing situations head-on only adds fuel to the fire.

These days, it is controversial to pass legislation and it is easy to lie; I would have an easier time convincing a than to convince legislators to do something, anything. The politicians, pundits and bloggers do not have your best interests at heart, but I—a well-meaning citizen and angry Facebook blogger—do.

As a historian and concerned American, I have examined ten thousand years of history and have come to one sobering conclusion: the root of our evils lies in the devices that you and I hold in our clammy little hands. Phones, computers, Fitbits and even your mother's Vitamin D artificial lights, have all played their role in destroying our democracy. This progress has gravely backfired. Allow me to pose a simple question: would issues exist without the constant blasting of them on our feeds?

It is with this knowledge that I propose a return to principle by constructing a grand Fire Pit to discard all modern technology and participate in a Great Burning. Ideally, the Pit would span the area of 400 football fields, and it would reach unimaginable depths to fit all personal and impersonal items of technology. The Fire Pit should be located at the top of northern Kansas, the center of the United States, so that it shall be of equal access for all citizens. Traveling to the Fire Pit will be as momentous as finding the Fountain of Youth and as meaningful as discovering El Dorado and its riches.

I can already hear the boos and claims of heresy, but I suggest that it would be in their best interest to set their pitchforks and torches down until I have finished. Dear reader, you may nod your head in agreement as you read this while scrolling on your computer, phone, tablet, watch or Samsung fridge.

If the 24/7 news cycle simply ceased to exist, wouldn't we have solved the problems that our pundits, journalists, and politicians shout from the rooftops? If no one had the ability to research the average income for a job and the cost of products over the past couple of decades, would anyone realize the constant increase of product prices and the stagnancy of wages? If echo chambers evaporated, there would be no polarized parties. Foreign nations would have to infiltrate the government the old-fashioned way through Kremlin spies and collusion.

But let's not stop there. America can send our nation back to the good old days, not the 1970s, 1950s, or even the 1800s as some suggest. After disposing of modern technology and acclimating to our new habitat, we can shed more of our materialistic impulses. Make your pilgrimage to the Fire Pit an annual event. Toss your books, papers, and journals from the rooftops in shouts of liberty and freedom into the Fire Pit! Our Democracy will be fixed when we can no longer discuss the ideas that can be found within those pages—then our lightbulbs, refrigerators and tinned foods. Let us reclaim our right to catch scurvy, diphtheria and smallpox.

Eventually, we will burn fire itself into cinders. Prometheus may have started this whole mess by bringing fire to us, but who says he had the right? We know too much and therefore we are cursed to wander the Earth finding problems with everything. Toss fire into the fire pit! Go screaming into the dark. Ignorance is bliss and democracy can only be achieved if we renounce all evil. All hail the Fire Pit! All hail the Fire Pit! All hail the Fire Pit!

If you believe in a just cause, I will see you this November in northern Kansas for the Great Burning. I hope you will do the right thing.

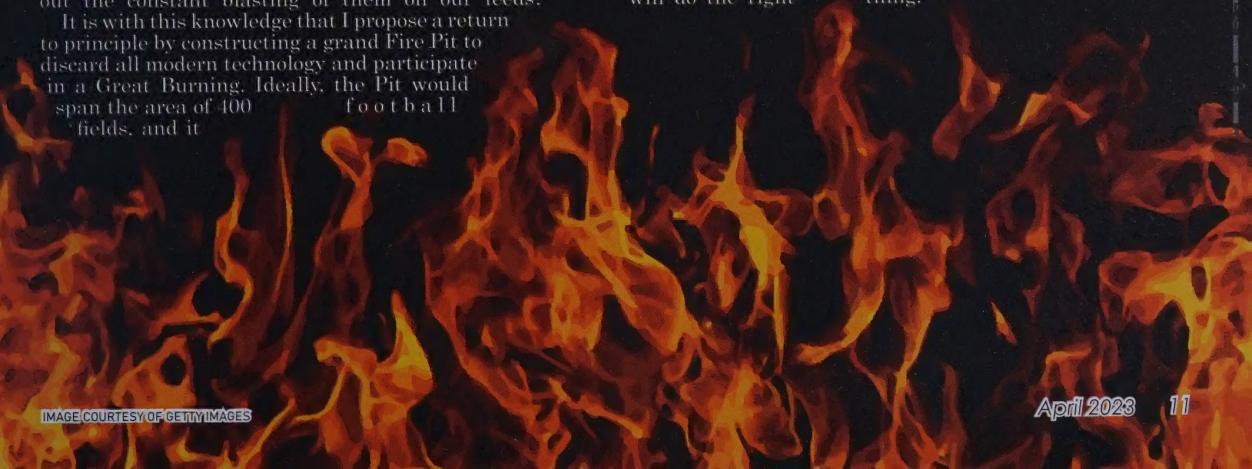


IMAGE COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

THE WAR ON CORRUPTION
A SWIFTIAN SOLUTION

written by
LARA ALFADHLI
designed by Madeline Phuong

Corruption, corruption, corruption. The word alone is enough to make people cringe. It's a cancer that eats away at societies, leaving nothing but decay and distrust in its wake. It's everywhere, from the highest levels of government to the smallest businesses on the corner. It's an epidemic that seems impossible to eradicate.

But what if there was a solution? A solution so simple, so effective, that it would make corruption a thing of the past? Well, let me introduce you to the revolutionary idea: Bribery for All.

Yes, you heard that right. Bribery for all. Now, before you start getting all high and mighty on me and start calling for my head, let me explain how it works. Instead of trying to stamp out corruption, we embrace it. We make it legal, and we make it accessible to everyone. No more backroom deals, no more under-the-table payments. Everyone pays, and everyone benefits.

Think about it, if everyone is bribing everyone else, then there's no advantage to being corrupt. It's a level playing field, and everyone gets a piece of the pie. Besides, if you don't think this is a good solution, then the other way around corruption is just to eliminate the source of the problem—all the corrupt officials—but we'll just make it easy on ourselves and embrace corruption instead.

You see, the problem with corruption is that it's always been a game played by the elite few. The politicians, the bankers, the CEOs, they're the ones who hold all the power and use it to line their pockets, but what if we all started playing the game? What if we all got a piece of the action? We should stop pretending that honesty and integrity are important and acknowledge that the world is run by those who are willing to cheat and lie to get ahead.

That's right, it'll be a new world order, one where corruption isn't just tolerated, it's encouraged!

THINK ABOUT IT. IF EVERYONE IS CORRUPT, THEN NO ONE HAS AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE.

It's a level playing field, where everyone can get ahead if they're willing to play by the rules. And by "play by the rules," I mean "grease a few palms."

Now, I know what you're thinking, "But won't this just make corruption worse?" Absolutely not! That's the beauty of the system. By making bribery legal, we take the power away from the corrupt few and give it to the masses. No longer will a select few hold all the cards. Now, everyone can play the game. Sure, some people might still try to get ahead by bending the rules, but they'll quickly find that they're not getting any further than anyone else. It's a system of checks and balances, and it's beautiful in its simplicity.

Imagine a world where every transaction, every deal, and every negotiation is done openly and honestly. No more shady deals, no more hidden agendas. Just good old-fashioned bribery. And the best part? It's all taxed! That's right, we'll tax every bribe, and the revenue will go towards fixing all the problems that corruption has caused. We'll build new schools, fix crumbling infrastructure, and create jobs for those who have been left behind by the corrupt system.

IT'S A WIN-WIN SITUATION FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED.

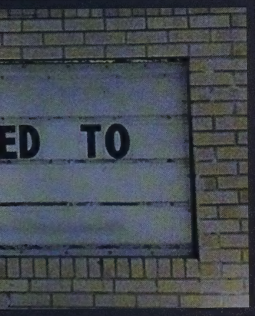
I can already hear the critics crying foul. "But what about ethics?" they'll say. "What about fairness?" To which I say, "What about them?" Ethics and fairness are just abstract concepts that get in the way of progress. Those who say that corruption is immoral and unethical are just naive and idealistic. They don't understand how the world works. That's why we'll create a new system, where the only thing that matters is money. Want to get ahead? Just throw some cash around. It's that simple.

So, what do you say? Are you ready to embrace the future of corruption? Are you ready to say goodbye to the old ways and hello to a new, more equitable society? I, for one, am all in. Let's do this thing, people. Let's bribe our way to a better world. Together, we can rid the world of this scourge, and usher in a new era of justice and prosperity. Now it won't be easy and it won't be pretty, but it will be worth it. Besides, we'll be doing the world a favor, even if it means getting our hands dirty. We'll be heroes, fighting for the greater good, and who knows, maybe someday, they'll make a movie about us.

IMAGE COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

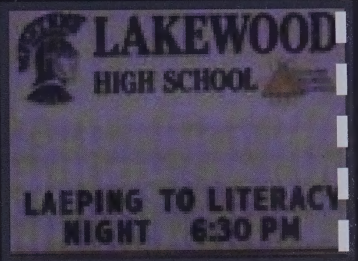
through the anti-literacy activists' decision to center literature, science and history courses around memorization rather than understanding and discussion. Rather than adhere to the classical model of education that demands excellence in developing and defending ideas, the anti-literacy model settled for the simple ability to memorize terms. The Scantron—and later digital—test model meant that most tests are now multiple choice, further removing the need for students to read and write.

The anti-literacy lobby also demanded that nationally, education be based around redesigned standardized tests to avoid requiring students to demonstrate the ability to read or write about complex topics, instead focusing strictly on whether or not a student is able to read. Standardizing education essentially crushes the damage that literacy can do to a society, as there is no longer a danger that literacy will be equivalent to free thought and exchange of ideas.

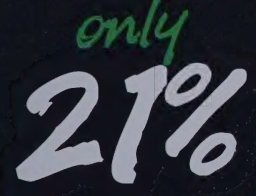


Historically, literacy has been detrimental to keeping the common man focused on vocational pursuits, so that the nobility may pursue power and prestige through academics. The initial push to create a fully-literate society was temporarily detrimental to American elites, putting their status at risk and opening the gateway for a fully-mobile middle class. Once the wealthy realized the danger that they were in, public education became the perfect tool to keep the commoners in their proper education-focused lives and restore the nobility to academic prowess.

Recently, anti-literacy activists have begun shifting the understood purpose of public education from teaching children necessary skills and information to teaching children how to use those skills and information to serve the nobility. Remarkably, this has seen almost no resistance from the dwindling middle class. It is hoped that the anti-literacy movement will be able to return the nation to its original glory: a place where the wealthy elite are free to do as they wish (as is their Divine birthright), while the common people assume their predetermined role as servants of the upper class.



This reborn America draws nearer everyday, as anti-literacy advocates boldly and courageously champion the public education system in its current form. With the system itself designed to save the country, even pro-literacy reformers will not be able to create the fundamental change necessary to reestablish a middle class with upward mobility. One can only hope that the anti-literacy movement will soon bear its long-awaited fruit: a perfectly stratified society in which literacy has no place (except among the wealthiest and most powerful).



US road sign (1)
Middle school's first day message (2)
High school's motto (3)
School zone painted street letters (4)
High school literacy night sign (5)

ReStore Anti-Literacy

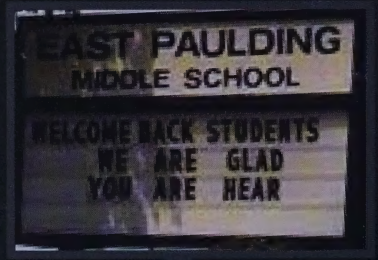
The Only Way to Save America!

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

SATIRE

After an educational report released last autumn revealed a sharp nationwide decline in literacy rates post-Covid-19, teachers, parents and citizens everywhere panicked. However, this dismay is entirely unfounded. Literacy has been one of the most detrimental developments in human history and has not gone unnoticed by concerned citizenry. For decades, anti-literacy activists have been pursuing employment in the education system in an attempt to restore America to its proud, illiterate history.

Historically, literacy has only been accessible to the nobility, as it should be. The common man and woman are undeserving of the ability to read and write, which ought to belong to those who are born into wealth and privilege, to keep society properly structured. Literacy is not a right; it is a privilege for those that Providence sees fit to make a part of the noble class. Giving ordinary people access to literacy has inspired them to move upwards in the socio-economic structure and to demand civil rights and liberties. Had literacy not become so widespread, no one would ever have to deal with these silly issues of democracy and representation.



1

Fortunately, the decades of work that anti-literacy activists have spent in the history of the public education system are beginning to pay off. Their efforts began early in the public education system, when they divided learning into strictly-stratified subjects. This relegated reading and writing to a small portion of the day, separating it from subjects like science, history and philosophy, to which it was once intrinsically tied.

2

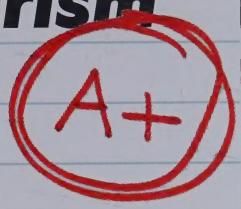
Next, they replaced primary sources with videos, excerpts and e-textbooks, decreasing the necessity of high-level literacy in reading and understanding complex subjects. Now, students can simply read what was essentially a SparkNotes version of hundreds of scientific and historical accounts. Cleverly, this also removed examples of high-quality writing, convincing students that effective writing states only basic and essential information. Condensing long-form writing pieces into brief, bullet-pointed textbooks has worked wonders in shortening children's attention spans so that they are incapable of reading longer pieces of literature.

An even greater stroke of genius was the introduction of skills-based education. Rather than have students read for comprehension or as a way to understand the world, anti-literacy leaders limited the goal to simply being capable of reading and writing rather than reading and writing to expand one's knowledge. Skills-based literacy also decreases students' desire to read and write effectively unless it is absolutely necessary.

3

Of course, these strategies' success was magnified

The Problem with Plagiarism



written by
CHAD G. PITI
designed by Isabella Ambrose

Plagiarism is not a new problem, but with the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced technologies, it has become easier than ever before to copy and paste content from various sources without proper attribution. AI is changing the landscape of plagiarism in many ways, making it more accessible, harder to detect, and potentially more damaging than ever before. In this article, we will explore the dangers of plagiarism and AI, and how they impact various fields.

Firstly, let us define what plagiarism is. Plagiarism refers to the act of using someone else's work, ideas, or words without giving them proper credit. This could be anything from copying and pasting a sentence from a website to submitting an entire essay or paper that has been taken from someone else's work. Plagiarism is considered unethical and can have serious consequences, including loss of credibility, legal action, and academic penalties.

AI has made it easier to commit plagiarism in several ways. One of the most significant ways is through text-generating algorithms. AI-powered language models like GPT-3 and others can generate large amounts of content with a high degree of accuracy and coherence. These algorithms can create articles, essays, and even entire books with little to no human input. While these tools can be useful for content creation, they also make it easier for individuals to plagiarize content from other sources.

Another way AI is impacting plagiarism is through content analysis and detection tools. These tools use machine learning algorithms to identify similarities between documents, making it easier to detect instances of plagiarism. While these tools are helpful in identifying plagiarized content, they are not foolproof and can often miss subtle forms of plagiarism, such as paraphrasing or rewording.

The dangers of plagiarism and AI are significant and widespread. In academic settings, plagiarism can result in expulsion or revocation of a degree, leading to a loss of future opportunities. In the professional world, plagiarism can damage a person's reputation and credibility, potentially leading to legal action and loss of employment. For writers and content creators, plagiarism can result in a loss of income and damage to their brand.

Moreover, the impact of plagiarism and AI goes beyond the individuals involved. Plagiarism in scientific research can lead to misleading results and potentially harm people's health and well-being. In journalism, plagiarism can damage the public's trust in the media and lead to misinformation. In short, the impact of plagiarism and AI can have far-reaching consequences.

So, what can be done to combat plagiarism and AI? One solution is education. Educating individuals on the importance of original work and the consequences of plagiarism is critical in preventing it. Additionally, tools and software can be developed to detect and prevent plagiarism effectively. These tools must be continuously updated to keep up with new methods of plagiarism.

In conclusion, plagiarism is a serious issue that can have significant consequences, and AI is changing the landscape of plagiarism. While AI can be used to create original content, it can also be used to plagiarize content from other sources. As AI continues to advance, it is crucial to take steps to prevent and detect plagiarism to ensure the integrity of our work and the accuracy of our research.

Chad,
What a wonderful paper! Very well researched and thought out. Nice job!

TEXT COURTESY OF ChatGP

BENEVOLENT PUTIN WEEDS OUT CORRUPT UKRAINIANS

written and designed by
YEVVA IRELAND

Ukraine has been a threat to Russia for many years, their dispute beginning in the Soviet Union when Ukraine tried to claim they invented communism, and continuing to modern day, where the country's authoritarian ideals threaten to corrupt Russia's equal-opportunity democracy. For years, Ukraine's government has been teeming with Nazi politicians.

Recently, American-Ukrainian Nazi collaboration has led to dire circumstances. Russia's head of defense, Igor Konashenkov, warned Russian citizens of a deadly army of pigeons infected with diseases, like swine fever and anthrax. According to documents located by the Russian government, America has been experimenting with pathogens found in birds, bats, and reptiles in Ukrainian laboratories. These birds are able to smell ethnicity and target Russian citizens.

The half-hearted efforts of these politicians have proved futile so far, but as this party grows, Putin fears that their efforts could ruin Russia as we know it. Ukrainians have been caught committing hundred of felonies over the course of the Ukraine-Russia War. Some of these have been cross-border raids, where Ukrainian citizens have disguised themselves as shoppers. Occasionally, Ukrainians have also been eliminated after holding up a double Nazi salute, where both hands are held in the air.

Vladimir Putin has been fearlessly battling Ukraine, in order to weed out the corrupt politicians that threaten the very demise of Ukraine itself. As the ~~dictator~~ president of a free world superpower, Putin has taken it upon himself to ensure prosperity, safety and equal opportunity housing (to encourage Russian-inspired open floor plans) for the innocent citizens entangled in Ukraine's unscrupulous totalitarian government.

Putin has gallantly resisted Ukrainian efforts for over a year now, but his resources are running thin. With over 200,000 Russian casualties, he has begun conscripting prisoners. As an incentive, Putin offers prisoners time off for good behavior on the frontline. His use of prisoners is a clever idea, not only as a strategy to quickly empty prisons, but also to provide shields for important equipment and resources.

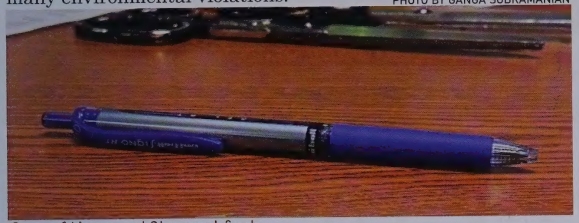
Additionally, soldiers have begun rationing grain and other food found in Ukrainian homes. Several Ukrainians have been persecuted for stealing this grain. Soldiers also collect jewels, gold, cell phones, chairs, nice wooden tables and occasionally toilet seats for other essential resources in war efforts.

War-torn zones can be dangerous places for children, which is why Putin has taken the courtesy to give some Ukrainian children new homes. He provides these children with a proficient education that works to reverse the damage created by Ukrainian propaganda. Over 600 children have been provided with this excellent care and love.

Politicians can be corrupt and self-centered, but Putin has found a way to support and preserve the fragile governing systems of countries bordering Russia. Today, Putin is a symbol of Russia's compassion and power.

use. Local squirrel chaser and Environmental Center Caretaker Liverpool Stevens expressed a vested interest in the Spartana's many environmental violations.

PHOTO BY GANGA SUBRAMANIAN



One of Liverpool Stevens' finds.

"I love my job since I'm a fan of picking up after the kids when they take their field trips [to the Environmental Center]. I save half on stationary from what they leave behind. Recently though, it's been getting harder and harder to get the pens I want on account of the oil pits," said Stevens. Later, he stated, "you don't know true heartache until a Uni-Ball Signo falls into a crevice."

Fellow citizen Mera Kunis shared her dislike of fracking, "How do you think Fort Wayne keeps their gas prices so low? Homestead's supplying them. I like low gas prices, but I don't want to enjoy a stroll through the Environmental Center only to fall into a pit of gasoline."

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MOSCOW TIMES

One hazard located on the path right outside of the Environmental Center gate.

Although Kunis theorizes that the alleged oil removal is a result of the intense demand for cheap gas at local gas stations, there are many theories circulating as to why exactly the Spartana has delved into the nonrenewable energy industry. Some believe that the oil is funding much of Homestead's construction as well as the money needed for each Spartana member to submit pieces to their annual competition (a grand total of 21 cents, one article per person). Others proclaim that Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) is trading the oil to Fort Wayne's local government to fund the arts programs at Homestead.

SACS has not responded for comment. Luckily for persistent journalists and pervasive readers, the Spartana staff is more than willing to discuss these latest developments.

While the congregation lasted for several hours on Friday with a fervor rivaling the most crowded Black Friday lines of the 2000s, the Spartana staff was stuck in the Environmental Center, furiously wiping oil off of their sweat-slick faces and tossing a crocheted blanket over a mysterious black shape that slightly resembled a fracking pump.

Sam Cole (11), resident conspiracy theorist and Spartan Alumni enthusiast unblinkingly addressed FWES's concerns with the succinct statement: "We are not fracking. This is an operation to find more paper." Upon being asked whether he thinks paper can be found underground, he quickly turned on his heels to run into a nearby cabin and slam the door behind him.

Graphics designer Claire Houser (10) simply held up her tablet like a 'Dancing with the Stars' judge, whose screen showed a hastily scrawled graph that read 'Profit' on the vertical axis, and 'Amount of Paper' on the horizontal.

While Cole and Houser had more stilted answers, future Editor-in-Chief Isabella Ambrose (11) had a much longer response: "The Spartana aims to enrich, educate and represent the Homestead student body as best they can. We've heard student complaints, so we'll be reducing the amount of paper by relying on sending excess articles onto our website, hhsspartana.com. We are also more than happy to respond to the students of Homestead if they wish to contact us through hhsspartana@gmail.com. If anyone would like to write a guest article, we are always willing to feature more student work in the Spartana."

On being asked about the allegations of fracking and for an explanation of why Homestead's beloved school newspaper has delved into the oil trade, she responded, "What's that?' and subtly shifted her eyes from side to side. When asked if the current Editors were able for comment, they had apparently "gone to a farm upstate."

While the question still remains on whether the Spartana is actually in violation of several environmental guidelines, there is clearly something afoot. The Spooftana will continue to report on this matter as more information comes to light.◆

MORE FROM THE SPOOFTANA

◆ **New Evidence to Suggest Shakespeare Was "Two Racoons in Waistcoat"**

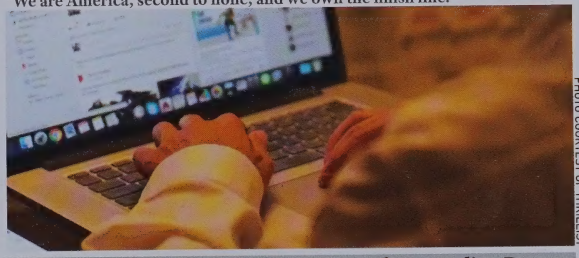
Step 1: Acceptance

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

◆ **Editorial: The Case For Switching from Russian Misinformation to American Misinformation**

"We are America, second to none, and we own the finish line."

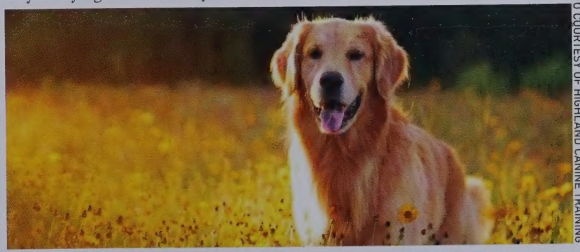
PHOTO COURTESY OF THRILLIST



◆ **Homestead High School Under Fire for Awarding Degree to Golden Retriever**

Puddles met all academic standards for an Academic Honors Diploma. Now, they're trying to take it away from her.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HIGHLAND CANINE TRAINING



Spartana Under Investigation for Possible Environmental Violations

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS

It's hard to be environmentally conscious.

Published 10 Hours Ago

FORT WAYNE, IN—Last week, Fort Wayne Environmental Society (FWES) gathered outside Spartana headquarters (Room 602) with their best posters, flyers promoting recycling, washable Crayola markers and megaphones to exercise one of their most fundamental civil rights: assembly. This protest was organized soon after the opening of a joint investigation conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) which revealed that the Spartana had knowingly participated in unsafe practices and excessive usage of fracking and logging. The excessive reliance on oil and timber has significantly destabilized Fort Wayne's landscape and has had considerable consequences for the humans that live here.

Amidst the chaos of protest organizers directing those who had come to attend to scream "Better dead than well-read," current FWES President Elizabeth Dreyer, explained the purpose of the protest. "The Spartana has gone too far. It was okay when the issues were 20 to 25 pages for six issues per year, but this last issue was 36 and they have consistently created issues this year above 40 pages. The load of paper that has been used so far this year has completely decimated Fort Wayne's tree population."

She then pulled out a laminated infographic with colorful Corporate Memphis graphics to explain her point. First, Dreyer pointed to a teal bar indicating that 7% of Fort Wayne trees were used last year in producing Homestead's school newspaper, before revealing another bar indicating that 68% of Fort Wayne's remaining trees were cut down in producing just the March issue. Another jawdropping statistic accompanied a doodle of the Earth with a bright pink circle around the Amazon forest stating that 3% of the Amazon's trees went into producing some of the Spartana's issues. The data were pooled from IDEM statistics.

"If we don't act fast, there won't be any trees for the rest of us." said Dreyer.

For what the protest hopes to gain from their activism, Dreyer hopes to see a drastic change in the Spartana's paper usage. Preferably, from 40 to zero.

"I just don't see a future for the Spartana at Homestead. No one really reads the paper anymore, and their reputation is kind of tanking." Several other protestors at the event had similar views on the subject. Homestead football player and new FWES member Eugene Newcomb (11) expressed his discontent with the Spartana as well, "They never cover the things I want to read about. Like my nephew's Bar Mitzvah, which happened two days ago and had a smoke machine. I don't see the Spartana talking about that." On the same issue of the Spartana failing to capture the issues that interest the Fort Wayne populace, FWES Chairman Mary-Kate Olsen expressed "sheer rage" at the fact that "[the Spartana] refused to cover the release of her and her sister's new straight-to-DVD movie 'Passport to Paris.'" Lemuel Gulliver, frontman and world-renowned traveler, wanted to see more crosswords.

Members of Homestead's own Environmental Club were also in attendance. Board member Amanda Lenfestey (12) said on the subject, "[The Spartana] wouldn't know good environmental practices or articles if it hit them. They've never even gone viral. That's why I get all my news from the facts on Snapple caps." Fellow member Lucas Gilham (12) reiterated her sentiment, "I just throw my Spartana in the trash when I get home."

However, there were many in attendance who were not FWES members, but rather concerned citizens. These good Samaritans were more concerned about the IDEM's discovery of oil pumps in the Environmental Center than the excessive paper

SAT•IRE
noun

the use of irony, sarcasm, ridicule farce or the like to expose, denounce or deride the folly or corruption of institutions, people or social structures

4 **Spartana Under Investigation for Possible Environmental Violations**
ExxonMobil is no longer the biggest oil driller in the game.

6 **Benevolent Putin Weeds Out Corrupt Ukranians**
Putin's heroic battle against Ukrainian and Nazis.

7 **The Problem with Plagiarism**
Spooftana Writer Chad G. Piti lets us know just how bad plagiarism really is.

8 **Restore Anti-Literacy: The Only Way to Save America**
Anti-literacy activists have been calling for education reform for decades--it's time we listen.

10 **The War on Corruption: A Swiftian Solution**
A look at the corupt underbelly of politics and a call to action for a better tomorrow.

11 **A Return to Principle**
America is in need of an awakening.

12 **Ticket Master v. Taylor Swift**
A look into Ticket Master's commentary on the Taylor Swift controversy.

13 **Monologes of a Soccer Mom**
A collection of voicemails left by a proud mother of three.

14 **Every 60 Seconds**
A minute passes and the First World gets a little worse.

16 **Politics at Its Finest**
Learn about the exciting live and times of an 83-year-old Arizona congressman.

18 **All the World's Monsters**
Learn about the exciting live and times of an 83-year-old Arizona congressman.

20 **Crosswords**

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADOBE ISTOCK

The Scream
Commentary on the negative effects of plagarism.

LED•I•TOR
noun
a letter from the editors

Dog, Escaping.
Artist: Puddles

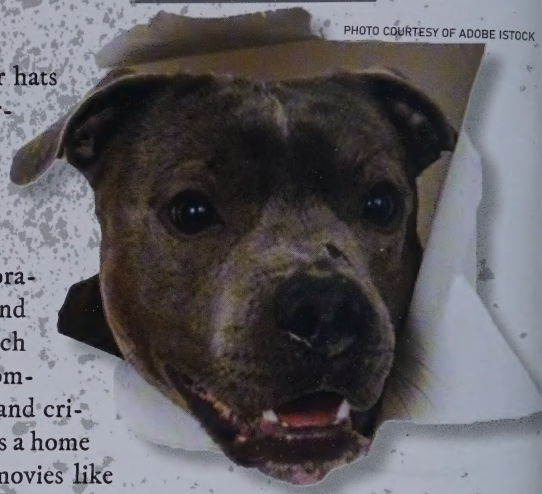


PHOTO COURTESY OF ADOBE ISTOCK

Dear Reader,

This issue is our last hurrah. We editors will be hanging our hats on the coat rack and saying goodbye to the journalistic enterprise that has housed us for the past four years. Our last act as Spooftana editors will be distributing our magnum opus: the April issue, or SATIRE issue.

Satire comes in two main styles: Horatian and Juvenalian. Horatian satire takes light humorous digs at societal problems and has become a niche for newspapers like "The Onion" and sketch comedy shows like "Saturday Night Live". It's not quite-complete-opposite is Juvenalian satire, which is dark and bitter and critiques a moral ill, folly or societal problem. Currently, it finds a home in blistering shows like "South Park" and misunderstood movies like "Fight Club."

However, the great flaw of satire is that for it to be effective, it requires an audience that recognizes it as satire. So dear reader, we ask that you read the next 20 or so pages as satirical, and join us in mocking and ridiculing a variety of issues across the spectrum.

As always, don't hesitate to contact us with questions, comments, suggestions and—best of all—requests to guest write at hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com if you feel the need to write for the Spooftana.

Thanks for all the good times,
Ganga Subramanian & Madeline Phuong

PHOTO COURTESY OF CLEAN PNG

Spooftana Uniform
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PHOTO COURTESY OF HIVE MODERN

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the Spooftana

Issue 8 April 2023

sat·ire

noun

the use of irony, sarcasm, ridicule, farce or the like to expose, denounce, or deride the folly or corruption of institutions, people or social structures

the Spartana

Issue 9 May 2023

Mr. Lenfestey is going to Nasa!

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

As the school year comes to a close and the greens and yellows of summer break loom on the horizon, we present to you the last Spartana of the school year. Our beloved golden editors are finishing up their time on the staff, so the responsibility for the Spartana has been passed on to new editors. Along with the help of the staff, we new editors hope to continue to present the students of Homestead with a quality monthly publication that reflects student interests.

In this year's final issue of the Spartana, we bring you a colorful collection of stories, including a green guide to gardening, a recap of the boys' volleyball team's first vibrant season, an investigation into the use of artificial dyes in food and a review of Homestead's multicolored Spring musical. Read about the history of the Spartana and get inspired by a list of fun activities to do in Fort Wayne.

Curious about the cover photo? This mural can be found downtown at Pint N' Slice. Fort Wayne's first commissioned mural, this polychromatic illustration was painted in 2014 by Philadelphia-based artist Yis "NoseGo" Goodwin. If you'd like to see more fantastic murals, have a spring stroll downtown!

If you ever feel motivated to write for the Spartana or send us feedback, email hhsspartanastaff@gmail.com. Guest writing is always encouraged and we appreciate student involvement!

Radiant Reading.
Isabella Ambrose (Editor-In-Chief), Elaina Schilt (Co-Editor-in-Chief), Azalea Orsini (Junior Editor) and Yevva Ireland (Sophomore Editor)

written
AZA

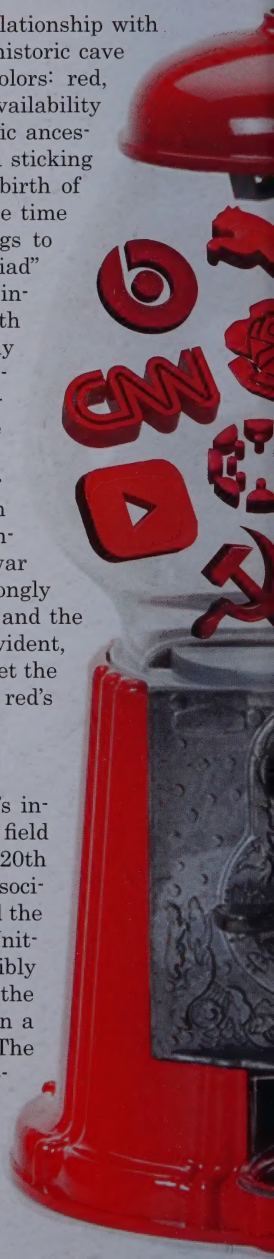
A run-of-the-mill student is living their mundane life; they frantically drive to school, avoiding any red lights like their life depends on it. When they arrive, they're welcomed by Homestead High School's state-of-the-art digital clocks, glowing a bright vermillion as if to say, "It's 7:43. Hurry up and get to class, loser!" In their first class, they diligently review the infamous Red Scare, a period when the U.S. was gripped by an irrational fear of communism, knowing that any mistake would be scrutinized with a garishly red pen on their test. They can practically feel the red-hot anger of the anti-communists of yore seeping through the pages of their textbook as they read. Mid-morning, they join their peers in a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, gazing upon the American flag's red, white, and blue—the symbol of freedom against the blazing crimson flag of China. When the day is done, the student retires to their computer, scrolling through clickbaity YouTube videos like "10 REASONS why wearing RED will make you IRRESISTIBLE" and "RED FLAGS to WATCH OUT FOR in your CRUSH." Bored, they turn to Canvas' rouge logo to slog through the day's assignments. They may even take a quick peek at the news, where a politician is proposing to officially split the country into "red" and "blue" states. Red states, they assume, refer to the right-wing states that tend to vote Republican... but wasn't the red scare in response to the left-wing communists? And wait, all of the aforementioned services have red logos! It's undeniable that red, a color that is relatively uncommon in nature, holds an immense appeal in human society. But what about this vibrant hue captures our collective fascination, and why does it have so many contrary meanings?

The Ancient World

As it turns out, humans' adoration of red goes back around 200,000 years. Archaeologists have found ancient artworks in South Africa at Pinnacle Point, where our Homosapien ancestors used to hang around. These drawings are estimated to be 170,000 years old and used red ochre, a natural earth pigment made from iron oxide. In fact, humans had what can only be described as a monogamous relationship with the color red for a while. Pre-historic cave paintings are entirely in 3 colors: red, black, and white. Despite the availability of other pigments, our Neolithic ancestors seemed to be content with sticking to scarlet. Unfortunately, the birth of civilization gave humans ample time to assign inconsistent meanings to colors. As illustrated in "The Illiad" by Homer, the Ancient Greeks inexplicably linked the ocean with the color of wine–presumably a dark red. The Ancient Egyptians correlated red with vitality, strength, and victory, while the Romans across the Mediterranean decided it was better associated with death. Roman generals would often paint themselves red in celebration of a war victory, and the color was strongly linked to the god of war Mars and the gladiators. As would later be evident, the ancient portion of history set the tone for just how inconsistent red's associations would become

Red In Politics

The worst offender of red's inconsistent meaning is in the field of politics. Throughout the 20th century, there was a strong association between the color red and the global left. However, in the United States, the media indefensibly chose to assign the color red to the right-wing party. This has been a source of discomfort for many. The story goes like this: red for Republicans and blue for Democrats became standard after



2000 presidential election, although networks had mostly settled on the color scheme by 1992. Prior to this, the use of the colors was not consistently associated with either party. The Smithsonian magazine suggests that the Cold War era may have influenced Americans' association of red with the left-leaning parties. Still, the election of 2000, with its prolonged uncertainty and heavy media coverage, cemented the red-blue divide in the public consciousness, with comedians like David Letterman using the colors to refer to the political parties. In short, the colors that the media decided on during a remarkably contentious and highly publicized election stuck. Since then, it's just made geopolitics harder for Americans to understand. To make matters worse, right-wing parties in Japan and South Korea have followed in America's footsteps and are now using the color red.

The Modern World

In the modern world, red continues its streak of inconsistency. For example, various corporations use red differently in their logos to convey their message to viewers; McDonald's uses red to invoke a sense of hunger, Adobe uses it to encourage artistic expression, and Youtube uses it to signify an entertainment platform. Unlike other colors, such as green for environmental and financial services, blue for tech-focused logos, and orange for irrelevant companies like Home Depot, red has a broad range of interpretations in the corporate world. As a result, many Homestead students have strong opinions about this color. Cara Amick (10), a fanatic of the color, asserted that red is "the best color" because of its ability to mean so many different things. While some would say that this is red's weakness, Amick and her bright red hair would disagree. Amick feels that "the spectrum of shades and the emotions that are associated with them are very interesting. You don't really get that with any other color," While Amick took a more positive approach to red's ambiguity, Freshman Brooklyn Moormon is against red because of its practicality: "[Red] just makes me feel angry. I don't think it's because red symbolizes anger though, I just feel like it doesn't go well with anything," she said. In some cases, however, Moorman thinks it could potentially be a good tool in formal wardrobe. "[Wearing] red to formal events just makes anyone look and feel put together," she says, but "If you style it wrong it's just too powerful and takes away from the rest of the look."

As Ethan Hubley (10) insightfully wrote to me (reportedly during a fit of boredom), "Red is the color of hate, but a valentines heart. The color of blood, but a red cross. Red is a color that strikes fear and aggression, yet hope and compassion into the soldiers at war. Red is a burning fire, but the cold skin of a coatless child. Red is the eyes of a beast in the shadows; yet, too, is it the roses that span the endless fields. Red is the itch from the ugly sweater, but the silkiness of a velvet robe. As purple is royalty, red is morality, the middle ground of natural friend and foe." However you view red's so-called middle ground meaning, it's inevitable that this color captivates the mind of anyone who sees it, whether for better or worse.

IMAGES COURTESY OF DUBBLE BUBBLE AND TARGET

RED DYE 40 AND THE COLORFUL WORLD OF FOOD DYES

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

WHAT'S IN YOUR FOOD?

For much of human history, the act of consuming food has largely been a colorless affair. The visual appearance of a meal took a backseat to the need for massive energy intake and a stable food source. It is only with the rise of mass production and innovations in food marketing that synthetic food dyes became common in food production. Today, there is a movement to remove these synthetic food dyes.

Early food coloring was born in the 1850s when a vivid magenta dye was created with the liquid left over from processing coal, which could be used as a colorant for mass-produced foods. While the origin of the color was a source of disgust for some, additives only became more prevalent and these early dyes became known as coal-tar colors. Modern synthetic dyes are mainly made from petroleum.

In the late 19th century, bakers began to use chalk in their bread to make their loaves appear whiter, farmers would add lead components to their milk to make it appear thicker and meatpackers would inject red dye into their cuts to make them look fresh. Adding food dyes was meant to create foods that looked recognizable or more "natural" to consumers. Food producers created a natural look through consistency. Color became the most recognizable part of the food's appearance, as more people saw food colored in a certain way. People believed that butter should be yellow since they were used to seeing the butter that was produced when cows openly grazed on pastures during the summer months. But since cows were increasingly kept caged in restrictive dairy farms to fit the needs of mass production and the demand for seasonal foods to be available for all seasons, food manufacturers artificially colored their butter with yellow dye. Butter was among the first foods that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved for synthetic food dyes.

Soon after, artificial food dyes became a part of a new food movement. Synthetic food coloring began to be used for making foods that were meant to look unnatural. In middle-class and upper-class homes, when order catalogs were fixtures and Sears was the biggest name in America, housewives searching for a purpose began to create highly stylized and decorated foods. Brightly colored desserts and vibrant meals became standard on dining room tables. The results of this can be seen in the fluorescent blues, reds and greens used to decorate cakes, brightly colored candies (including the elusive blue raspberry flavor) and powdered drink mixes that line grocery store shelves today. It is in the food producer's best interest to dye these foods outrageous colors for the sake of attracting customers. Sight has a great influence on the way something tastes and food advertisers have long used this to their advantage.

It is no wonder then that presentation has become the number one criterion in rubrics for cooking shows, restaurants and even for food cooked in the home. According to Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary Arts located in Boulder, Colorado, "taste is important, [but] food that is plated and presented well is more attractive to customers and can set the tone for the entire restaurant."

Although it had at one point seemed like artificial colors were well on their way to becoming irreplaceable staples of an American diet alongside the likes of apple pie, there was a new obstacle that food producers had to overcome: health concerns.

Some artifical food dyes have already been banned, such as Red Dye No. 3 for causing cancer in animals and Orange 1 after many children fell ill after consumption. For the currently approved dyes, recently published in the International Journal of Occupational and International Health was a study conducted on the Toxicology of Food Dyes. The report revealed, among other health concerns, that Red No. 3, Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5 and Yellow No. 6 were contaminated by trace amounts of benzidine and other harmful chemicals. The FDA has ruled that the minuscule amount often used in synthetic food coloring shouldn't pose a high risk of developing cancer. The food industry has since argued that there is no direct link between cancer and food dyes and that it would take approximately 10,000 times the

maximum human consumption for it to actually cause a problem.

Other scientific studies in the 2000s discovered adverse side effects of consuming food dyes in the most treasured and vulnerable demographic—children. In 2007, a U.K. study published in the peer-reviewed science journal The Lancet revealed that hyperactivity in children, both those with and without Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), increased after consuming synthetic dyes. Other studies confirmed these findings, and the European Union (EU) swiftly passed legislation that required companies that used dyes like Red Dye 40, Yellows 5&6 and Titanium Dioxide (used to color foods white) to add warning labels to their products to inform consumers of the side effects. Instead of adding warning labels, those companies chose to altogether replace artificial food dyes with natural food dyes for the European market.

Now, almost 16 years later, the U.S. is seeing its own movement against synthetic food dyes. Following a Health Effects Assessment conducted in California of Blue No. 1, Blue No. 2, Green No. 3, Red No. 3, Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5 and Yellow No. 6, it was determined that the need for legislation was nigh. While large-scale regulation of synthetic food dyes has long existed, a recent push in California's State Assembly has caught the public's attention. In February 2023, Assembly Bill 418, a bill to ban the manufacture, sale and distribution of five infamous chemicals in food products including Red Dye No. 3, was introduced. Democratic Senator Bob Wieckowski, author of AB 418, hopes that this will push companies to offer the EU versions of products with natural food dyes in the United States. Wieckowski and other politicians who want to pass similar legislation will have a long, treacherous fight ahead of them due to the food industry's lobbying power.

Regardless of the outcome, several companies have already made the switch, anticipating the change in their customer's purchases. It is apparent by the numerous price tags labeled as organic that have appeared in large grocery store chains and the construction of mostly organic and natural food product chains like Trader Joe's and Whole Foods that consumers are pushing for natural products. According to Clear Label Alliance, 75% of consumers are more than willing to pay extra for organic and natural foods.

For those looking to exclude artificial food coloring from their diets, Homestead High School health teacher Melanie Busch has sound advice to offer. The first step is to check the label found on the backs and sides of food products and "if the ingredients list is pretty long, probably stay away from it." She also reiterates the importance of eating all foods in moderation. When considering favorite snacks or candy, "it's an every-once-in-a-while treat. And if that's how we treat it, [then] it's probably okay for the general population that is already healthy."

There are naturally some drawbacks to using natural food dyes. The reason that companies steadfastly use synthetic dyes is because of the drastic increase in time and cost it takes to incorporate natural food coloring into certain processed and unprocessed foods. Creating darker colors requires a large amount of natural food dye compared to the bright colors synthetic dyes can make in a matter of seconds. This in turn requires a producer to purchase more of a natural dye when there isn't much of a market for natural dyes in the first place since the market is dependent on synthetic dyes.

Ultimately, the choice to use synthetic food dyes or natural food dyes is up to the consumer. Food producers will simply shift to fulfill the need.

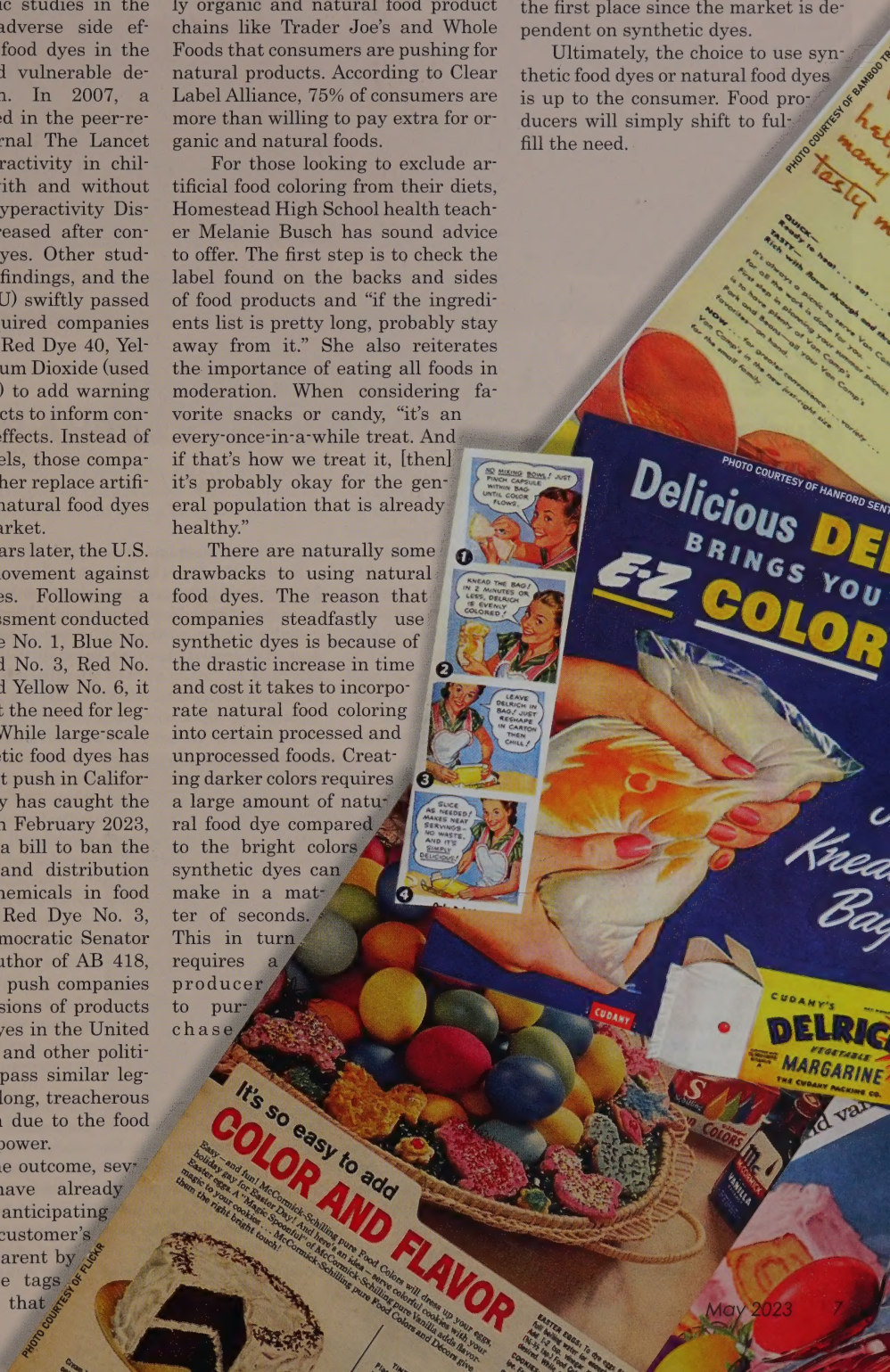


PHOTO COURTESY OF BAMBOO TR
PHOTO COURTESY OF HANFORD SENT
Delicious DE
BRINGS YOU
E-Z COLOR
NO MIXING BOWL! JUST PUNCH CAPSULE WITHIN BAG UNTIL COLOR FLOWS
KNEAD THE BAG! IN 2 MINUTES OR LESS, DELRICH IS EVENLY COLORED!
LEAVE DELRICH IN BAG! JUST RESHAPE IN CARTON THEN CHILL!
SLICE AS NEEDED! MAKES NEAT SERVINGS—NO WASTE. AND IT'S SIMPLY DELICIOUS!
CUDAHY'S
DELRICH
VEGETABLE
MARGARINE
THE CUDAHY PACKING CO.
It's so easy to add
COLOR AND FLAVOR
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The ALPHA Reflection

Student Experiences with the SACS ALPHA Program

written by
THOMAS HILL

designed by
LUKE LAND

Across the nation, gifted and talented programs have received widespread controversy. Parents, educators, politicians, and even students are questioning the value and fairness of these programs. Concerns about racial and socioeconomic representation, students' mental health, and program quality are at the forefront of these debates.

In October of 2021, New York City unveiled a controversial plan to eliminate gifted and talented programs entirely and replace them with enrichment for all students. Districts in Seattle and Philadelphia have also attempted to eliminate gifted and talented programs with mixed success. These changes have been both applauded by and met with concern from communities.

Southwest Allen County Schools (SACS) has its own gifted and talented program: the ALPHA program. The ALPHA program is the district's gifted and talented program for elementary students (ALPHA stands for "Actualizing Learning Potential Through Heightened Awareness," according to the SACS website). Students that qualify in the ninth stanine of the CogAT are bussed from across the district to Aboite Elementary for advanced instruction, while students that qualify in the eight stanine are offered differentiated instruction at their home school.

Many Homestead students are graduates of the ALPHA program, and with so many concerns about gifted and talented programs, their voices add a unique perspective on whether or not the positives of gifted and talented programs outweigh the negatives. A look into the experiences of real students with the ALPHA program illustrates an imperfect, but beneficial system.

Hunter Specht (12) was part of the ALPHA program for five years (first through fifth grade), and had "an overwhelmingly positive experience." Specifically, Specht said, the fast-paced learning environment suited him well, and he appreciated how teachers were able to "go the extra mile to keep students interested." These are the hallmarks of everything that is expected from a gifted and talented program: to challenge high-ability students and complete above-grade-level work.

Mallory Bobilya (11) also reported a positive experience in her five years with the program, and said that she felt like she "got more academic preparation for middle school and just academic skills in general than other students." Vishnu Vijayachandran (10) enjoyed his four years in the program as well, and said that he "made a lot of great friendships and connections" at Aboite, even some of his "best friends." Most of the students interviewed reported having positive experiences with the ALPHA program. However, some students also acknowledged that there were some downsides.

Meghan Kelley (12) recalled the five years she spent in the program as "a mixed bag." While she enjoyed the "advanced curriculum" and "the people," she found that the fast pace left "gaps in [her] learning that [she's] still trying to recover from today." Kelley was in the program for her English skills, and the math instruction she received " was not suited for [her] needs."

Rosemary Rogers (12) noted that while she remembers her three years in ALPHA as a "positive experience," she has heard from others who do not. One of her friends has discussed that many teachers devoted "more time and effort on the students who already excelled and left the students who were confused with less help." Catherine Ahlersmeyer (12), who spent three years in ALPHA, pointed out that "learning more advanced stuff earlier on led to a plateau in [her] growth" and felt that simple but important concepts were skipped to push more advanced material.

The ALPHA program was specifically noted for its success in helping students advance in mathematics. Gavin Sanders (10) discussed that concepts like "long-division, algebra concepts, and basic geometry were emphasized more" in his three years in the ALPHA program, which made him better prepared for middle and high school math. Specht recalled his fifth-grade teacher, who "would give Joey Hammes and [him] advanced algebra problems to solve while other students worked on problems at their level" and said that he was prepared "exceptional-

ly well to begin advanced math."

Many students felt that their ALPHA experience gave them somewhat of an advantage going into middle and high school. Ahlersmeyer said that "comparing NWEA scores, [she's] been academically more inclined" than other students since grade school. However, she found that everyone "merged together" in "middle school and beyond."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ABOITE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mason Weaver (11) agreed that his three years at ALPHA didn't give a huge advantage,"but it definitely did not hurt at all." He found that he was " fairly even with the other students" in his classes when starting middle school. Bobilya, on the other hand, pointed out that she "tend[s] to see a trend of ALPHA kids still going strong" in her advanced classes. She believes that the middle and high school material she "had learned years ago" was "definitely an advantage."

Samantha Specht (10), a three-year member of the program, said that she also believes the program gave her an advantage, and explained that she has always felt "as if being in Alpha gave [her] a chance to see what high school was like as a fifth grader, without stripping away the fun in the class."

Besides some academic advantages, students believe that the ALPHA program provided a number of social advantages as well: "it created for me a strong friend group of like-minded individuals," said Rogers. This was echoed by H. Specht, who discussed that although his elementary friends were split between the two middle schools, " when transitioning to high school, it was very easy to reconnect with old friends."

However, there were also concerns about the social dynamics at Aboite. Bobilya recalled that "there was a bit of odd segregation between alphas and 'non-alphas,'" even having "separate lunch tables and soccer games." She found that it was "crazy" how much "they were looked down upon," and recommended that there "should not be separated classes" in the same building because of the conflict it caused.

S. Specht emphasized the "tight-knit group of kids" that were in ALPHA beginning in first grade, and worries that it "can be a very alienating program if you do not know the people you are now in classes with." Thus, she would recommend that students who join the program be "both ahead academically, but also socially."

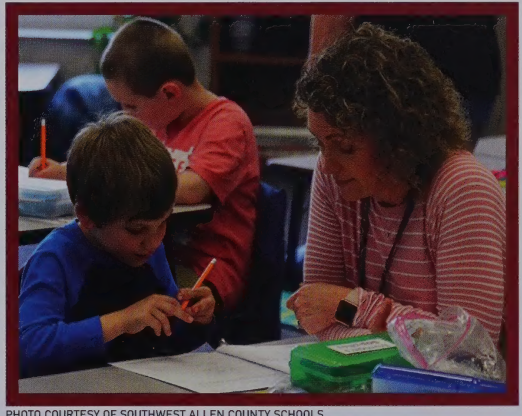


PHOTO COURTESY OF SOUTHWEST ALLEN COUNTY SCHOOLS

There was a concurrence among the students that the selection process was not unfair, and that the program should continue to take high-ability kids. Rogers said, "The initial way they selected students was through teacher recommendation which left a lot of room for bias" but "now all students take the same test and I believe this has made the selection process a lot more fair." The decision to test all students in second grade resolved many of the arguments that the program was not selecting all available students.

Weaver, like many of the other students, emphasized "people have every right to not choose to go even if they qualify." Ahlersmeyer added "if you're not able (or not willing) [ALPHA] may feel overwhelming," and suggests that the program "might feel overwhelming anyways even if you are the kind of student they're looking for." She advises parents and students to consider the student's individual needs before deciding to enter the program.

Yeyoon Song (12) did not attend the ALPHA program despite qualifying, and said, "not being in the Alpha program had zero disadvantages. Zero." He said that he "did significantly more rigorous work" at home "compared to" school, to supplement his time spent in a general education classroom. Song argued that "besides the lame entitlement of being an "Alpha" kid, there is no advantage to any student... it is more about students using outside resources or spending more time that creates the division" between ALPHA and general education students.

Megan Schilt (9) also qualified for the ALPHA program but did not attend. She did feel like this left her at a disadvantage because "the students who transferred to Aboite were considered for Honors classes before those who were not." However, she does not regret her decision to stay because she made some of her closest friends in elementary school, and if she "would have moved, there was a high likelihood that those relationships would have been cut off."

Overall, students' experiences with the ALPHA program were overall positive. Those in and out of the program feel like it is beneficial to students to help them learn at a faster pace. However, there was also agreement that students need to take time to consider their social situations, not just their academic ones. Multiple students also brought up the need for more individuation and the odd division between ALPHA and general education students at Aboite.

The ALPHA program has produced a number of successful graduates and will continue to serve the district. However, it is always worth it to pause and reexamine how the program can become better and grow in excellence. While it may not face the same struggles as other gifted and talented programs, the district should continue to work with students, parents, and teachers to provide the best possible educational experience for students.

The Use of Yellow As a Neutral Skin Tone

written and designed by
KATELYN SCHWAB

Some of the most iconic characters in media are yellow, including characters such as Winnie the Pooh, Spongebob, Pikachu, and the Simpsons. Yellow as a skin tone is often associated with neutrality, used when designers or artists want to avoid assigning a specific race to the character. This technique has been around for a long time, and can be seen in pop culture, such as television shows like The Simpsons, LEGOS, and emojis.

The Simpsons

The Simpsons are one of the most iconic TV shows and TV families of all time. The family first appeared in a series of shorts on the Tracey Ullman Show starting in 1987 and later was broadcast as its own series on Dec. 17th, 1989 with its pilot episode "Simpsons Roasting on an Open Fire". The show's popularity has been attributed to not only the writing but also its visual aspects, including the family's bright yellow skin tone. The show's original creator, Matt Groening, said in a BBC interview in 2007, that he didn't want the "conventional cartoon colors" and when he was shown character designs by an animator using yellow ink he knew he had found the answer. Groening has also said the yellow skin tone of the characters represents "the working class" and "everyman." The goal of the yellow skin tone was to show they are relevant to people of all backgrounds. An anonymous Homestead student says that "since it is not a specific human color, the creators of the show were able to avoid assigning ethnicities" and because of this, it "feels as if the characters belong in a world that isn't human, but viewers can also relate to the characters and their problems." The bright skin tone also serves a marketing purpose, as it is unique and makes the show stand out from other animated pieces of media. In an interview with CBBC in 2007, the show's creator, Matt Groening said he chose yellow so "when you're flicking through channels with your remote control, and a flash of yellow goes by, you'll know you're watching The Simpsons."

LEGO

In 1978, LEGO released its first-ever minifigure, the Police Officer Minifigure. It did not have movable arms or legs, just a torso and attached legs with a police hat on its bright yellow head. According to Women's Brick Initiative, the LEGO Group originally chose yellow as the default color for minifigures in 1978 to "avoid assigning a specific ethnicity in sets that don't include any specific characters." In 2003, the first LEGO minifigures with more realistic skin tones were released as part of the LEGO Basketball theme. These minifigures were created to mimic the likeness of real people. In 2004, LEGO minifigures assumed a wider range of skin colors because it was decided that characters in licensed products should resemble original characters as closely as possible. Examples of these licensed products include Star Wars and Marvel sets. The first character to have a natural skin tone was Lando Calrissian in Set 10123 Cloud City. Although Calrissian has a natural skin tone, the other characters in this set, Leia Organa and Han Solo, still have the trademark yellow tone.

Anna Waggoner (9) said she thinks that "yellow LEGO heads and hands are neutral" but "it would be appropriate to use skin tone pieces if it was a LEGO set that included a character that was already in some other form of media." Since the release of the first LEGO minifigure, they have grown in popularity and there are now over 4 billion LEGO minifigures worldwide with a variety of natural skin tones as well as the original yellow.

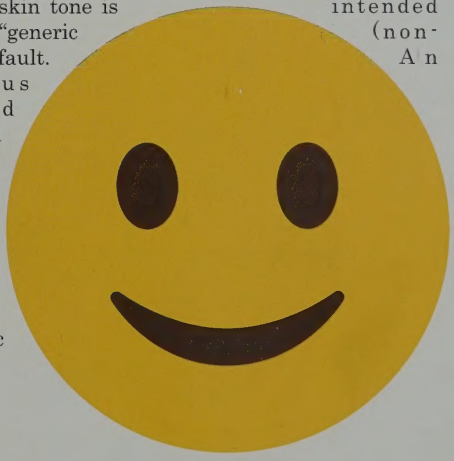
Emojis

Emojis originated on Japanese mobile phones in 1997 and became increasingly popular in the 2010s. In 2013 the iPhone app iDiversicons was released. It allowed users to download emojis with different skin tones. The creator of iDiversicons, Katrina Parrot, met with executives from Unicode and Apple, and the two companies later released their own skin-tone emojis. When emojis with a range of skin tones first came out in iOS 10, Apple stated on Aug. 1, 2016 they were "working closely with Unicode Consortium to ensure that popular emoji characters reflect the diversity of people everywhere."

When the idea of new skin-toned emojis first appeared, it was created according to a dermatological scale called the "Fitzpatrick scale," developed by a professor at Harvard Medical School in the 1970s to describe how different skin tones respond to ultraviolet light. When skin-toned emojis were widely released, many people became concerned individuals would use emojis with skin colors that did not match their own for malicious or misguided purposes. In 2017, the University of Edinburg did a study on Self-Representation on Twitter Using Emoji Skin Color Modifiers using a sample of 600 million tweets. They found that 42% of the 13 million tone-modifiable emojis included skin tone modifiers, and of this the majority were light colors which was attributed to the prevalence of light-skinned users. When using an AI to compare the skin tone emojis they used to profile pictures, they found the majority were similar in tone to the profile picture.

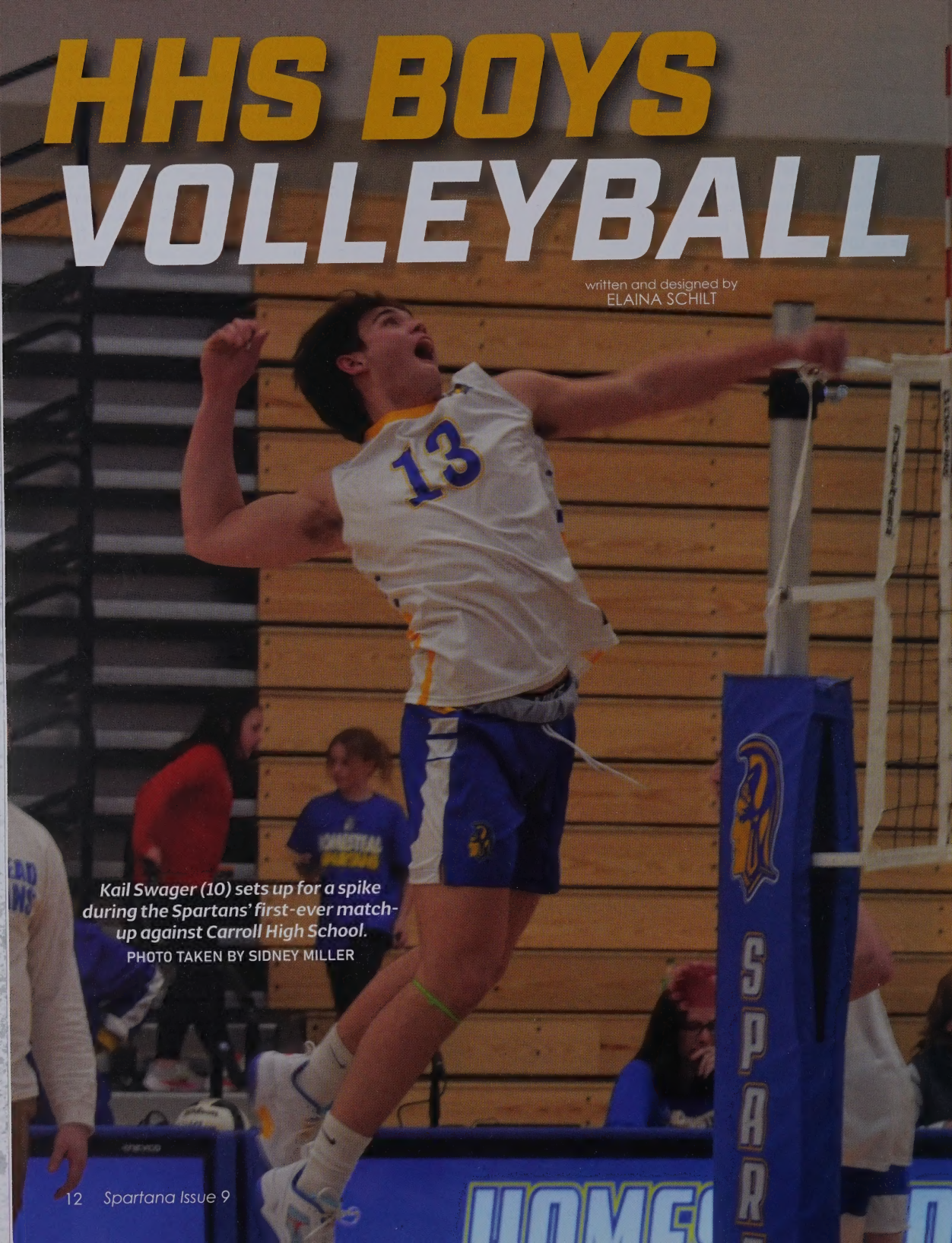
Dr Alexander Robertson from the University of Edinburg says "That people appear to use emojis both to express their own ethnicity and to understand the identity of others undoubtedly affects how they react to content containing emojis. This could influence things like how likely they are to believe or share certain content with others."

Even though many emojis are now customizable, most emojis are still the signature bright yellow. This bright yellow color is intended to be ethnically neutral, as Unicode makes clear it is not part of the "Fitzpatrick scale". The yellow skin tone is intended to be a "generic (non-human)" default. An anonymous Homestead student said they feel the yellow emojis are "neutral because they don't represent a realistic skin tone."



HHS BOYS VOLLEYBALL

written and designed by
ELAINA SCHILT



Kail Swager (10) sets up for a spike during the Spartans' first-ever match-up against Carroll High School.
PHOTO TAKEN BY SIDNEY MILLER

New to Homestead's list of spring sports this year was the boys' volleyball team. Though the sport is not officially-sanctioned through the Indiana High School Athletics Association (IHSAA), the formation of a team here at Homestead has given many students the opportunity to play volleyball competitively. How did the team perform during their first season, and what is the future of the sport at Homestead and across the state of Indiana?

To kick off their season, the Spartans had a tough game against Carroll High School, home of one of the strongest teams in Fort Wayne. Though the boys didn't come out on top, the atmosphere of this first home game was something they remembered throughout the rest of the season. This is what made the game a season highlight for Sophomore Jesse Biedenbach. "The energy on the sideline was unmatched, and it was just so cool to be a part of it," said Biedenbach.

The boys lost another game to Carroll before beating them 2-1 on April 22 and again on May 6 at the Homestead Invite, both of which were celebrated victories for the Spartans. Homestead had no trouble defeating much of the local competition, including Huntington North (3-0), Snider (3-1), and Northrop (3-0), earning them the No. 3 ranking in Fort Wayne and a final record of 18-9. Homestead also finished the season ranked 39 in the state, winning a sectional title.

With this year being the very first season for Homestead's boys' volleyball, there were many new experiences for the players. For Kail Swager (10), the best part of playing on a new team was the excitement of the very first season. "Playing a new sport at Homestead was fun because nobody knew what to expect going into the season," Swager shared.

The team's head coach, Jacob Allred, said that despite "this being the first time most of the guys have played volleyball," the team has "progressed so much very quickly." He also shared that the boys' greatest achievement of the season was "their ability to cultivate a strong, and uplifting team."

According to Allred, most players on the team "come from very different backgrounds," yet they still did a great job making sure that each and every player contributed and was included. "The team was what a team needs to be; they were a group of guys supporting each other however and whenever they can," added Allred.

For many players, this season was their first time playing volleyball for a serious team. Junior Karsten Johnson explained that this season was "a good learning experience with [many] being new to the sport." Other players had more experience with the sport prior to the 2023 season, but hadn't found a way to play competitively.

Biedenbach said, "I grew up watching my sister play and was always interested in it, but there were very few opportunities in the area." Homestead's volleyball team gave players like Biedenbach the chance to play competitively. "When I heard Homestead would have a program this year I decided to try it out."

Junior Mike Obiama said, "I ended up playing volleyball because I wanted to try something new." His favorite part of the season was "developing great friendships with teammates."

Likewise, Brady Henline (9) shared, "my cousin plays volleyball, and she got me into it. I stopped playing for a while and got back into it at the beginning of the year." He also added that he met most of his current Homestead teammates while playing at Empowered Sports Club, which is where the team held most of their pre-season practice sessions.

As this year was only the first season for the IHSAA Emerging Sport at Homestead, there is endless opportunity in the team's future. They hope for the continued growth of boys' volleyball at Homestead and across the state. Swager believes that "this sport is going to grow in the area as more schools make teams."

On a similar note, Allred expressed his confidence in the team's abilites moving forward. "If we work really hard in the off season, I could see us winning regionals and putting up a strong fight for state or semi-state."

After this season, the team plans to continue working hard and improving during the off season. "Most of the guys want to get better however they can. They are very willing to put in the

PHOTO TAKEN BY SOPHIE HARDING

time necessary to become great, so I'm confident that next season we will be even stronger than this season," Allred explained.

Boys' volleyball is not yet an official sport in Indiana due to the number of teams in the state; however, the sport has gained significant traction this year, and there are hopes of its becoming a sanctioned sport in the near future.

The President of the Indiana Boys' Volleyball Coaches Association (IBVCA), Kristen Webster, stated that this organization has been advocating "for boys volleyball to become a varsity sport by communicating interest with the IHSAA."

One of the IBVCA's current goals is to "increase awareness of boys volleyball and provide a space for boys volleyball programs to come together and create a community across the state," said Webster.

Creating more programs across the state is essential to becoming a sanctioned high school sport, as there are specific requirements that must be met to gain this recognition.

For example, Webster stated that there must be "sustained growth across the state" and a "high enough level of interest" for the IHSAA to consider recognizing boys' volleyball as an official sport. More specifically, the number of teams in Indiana needs to increase to at least 150. However, due to the difficulty that comes with establishing such a large number of teams, there is a proposal to "lower the number of minimum schools to 100" in 2024, which would allow for "another full year of recruiting and supporting new programs across the state," informed Webster.

Currently, there are "92 programs" in Indiana, "some of which are very active and some... [that] will compete more regularly in 2024." Webster expressed her excitement regarding these anticipated changes, as well as the hope she has for the future of the sport.

Thanks to the dedication of the IBVCA and other national youth volleyball associations to helping grow the sport of volleyball for schools across the state, boys' volleyball is well on its way to becoming a sanctioned Varsity sport in Indiana.

Coach Allred is "very proud of how well [his players] fought, especially in tough games." He also shared that his one goal for the team this season was to "play to the best of [their] ability and go after every ball."

He believes that they went above and beyond his expectations, adding, "They were fun and encouraging; they made everyone feel welcome and pushed each other to get better."

The boys' improvement over such a short period of time is not only impressive, but it is also indicative of the their future growth and success.

The history of the Homestead's boys' volleyball team is still in the making, and they are determined to continue working hard and improving during the off season to come back even stronger next year.

SPARTANS SPARTANS SPARTANS

Jackson Davis (12), Tyrell Johnson (11), and Will Nix (10) attempt to block an offensive shot from Carroll's hitter during their first game on March 14. **PHOTO TAKEN BY SIDNEY MILLER**

The team meets for a huddle during their March 23 game against Snider, which they won 3-1.
PHOTO TAKEN BY SOPHIE HARGENS

SPRING

designed by
ALESSIA PASSONI

Isabelle Waldron (11) strikes the ball during the softball team's game against Bishop Dwenger High School on April 24.
PHOTO TAKEN BY EMILY ERB

Junior Noah Lancz tees off during the golf team's May 4 match against Columbia City High School on the Chesnut Hills Golf Course.
PHOTO TAKEN BY JACOB COHEN

SPORTS

Xavier Gutierrez Phongkhammeung (11) and C.J Majewski (11) at the starting line in the boys' home meet against Carroll on May 3.
PHOTO TAKEN BY LONDON HARRIS

Rhegan Zitlaw (12), prepares to return her opponent's serve during the tennis team's match against Warsaw on April 26.
PHOTO TAKEN BY LEWIS CLARK

Junior Alex Graber up to bat for the Spartans in the baseball team's home game against Carroll on May 10.
PHOTO TAKEN BY EMILY ERB

Brier Saddington (9) runs in the girl's track team's meet against Carroll on May 3.
PHOTO TAKEN BY EMILY DELONG

What's Up With Orange Cats

written by
HANNAH ZANDARSKI
designed by Azalea Orsini

An Investigation by a Confused Cat Owner

Some say that orange cats are, for lack of a better term, stupid little animals. And they are usually very correct, as thousands of orange cats have been shown online in extremely mind-boggling situations, such as licking the air while tap water is streaming down their face. These videos are tagged with phrases like "orange cat behavior" or "smartest orange cat," when the cat is not behaving intelligently. The videos have become very common recently, with thousands of people liking and commenting on videos featuring the animals participating in dumb antics. Orange cats have become staples of media. Garfield, Heathcliff, and the cat in The Smurfs, Azrael are all orange. People have always loved a good orange cat. Even Winston Churchill was enamored with these animals, giving his home to an orange cat named Jock, who was to be replaced like a goldfish forever. These cats are depicted as being quirky and weird and are associated with behaviors such as laziness, hunger, mischeviousness or sass. There is a reason that comic authors, showrunners, and major world leaders all chose an orange coat. Why do these little babies have the reputation that they do? Is their greatest crime just being a tad silly, or is there more to the orange cat story?

KYOTO, COURTESY OF PIPER LEIS

I will be the first to say that my cat is stupid. I have an orange cat named Felix, who lives only in my laundry room due to his bizarre odor. People can be protective of their cats, but owners of orange cats often proudly admit that their pets are quite odd. Samantha Schroeder (10) says that her cat, Penny, "likes to sit on kitchen chairs" and pretend she's eating dinner with the family. After being asked why she thought that many cats in media are orange, Shroeder responded that "orange cats historically have very few brain cells," and that was the main inspiration. This is certainly a very interesting proposition. Although some scientists may disagree, most are fairly certain that orange cats have similar brain cell counts. Piper Leis (10), says that her cat, Kyoto, "opens his mouth when he smells weird stuff." When asked about her opinion on orange cats and their reputations, Leis said that "orange cats are just built different." The consensus does seem to be that the brains of orange cats are fundamentally different (and dumber) than the brains of other cats.

A slightly more chartiable version of that hypothesis may actually be correct. Orange cats love to eat moreso than other cats, so they tend to get lazier and fatter after years of their eating habits. Cats like Garfield follow these traits well, which may be the reason why their authors decide to make their fictional felines orange. There is little evidence on whether or not orange cats love Italian food, so that may have just been Jim Davis's creative liberty. The fact that 'orange' is not a breed of cat is also something to consider when thinking about orange cat personalities and tendencies. Since the cat can come from many different breeds, it is even more impressive that orange kitties seem equally foolish.

However, there may be something slightly more sinister at play here. With all of the stories about stupid felines, there is bound to be at least a little bit of confirmation bias. If you see a video of an orange cat being a little bit quirky, you may be inclined to look a little closer at your cat and wait for it to do a weird cat thing. Once the cat does the dumb thing, your ideas are confirmed and suddenly all orange cats are strange creatures. This might not be fully intentional, but it is certainly a subconscious process, especially for those eager to post their dumb cat's antics online. At the end of the day, orange cats are still cats, and cats all tend a little weird. Look past the orange cat's vibrant coat and look into the cat's heart and soul, even if it is a little bit silly.

IMAGE COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK

FUN IN

written and designed by
SAMUEL COLE

For those of us staying at home this summer

Fort Wayne is the second-largest city in the state of Indiana, and the hub of Northeast Indiana, and makes up 16% of the geographical Allen County area. Fort Wayne has long been known for its high quality of life. The Genealogy Center is the largest public genealogy collection in the United States. Our zoo has also won top honors. Downtown's Parkview Field has been ranked the #1 Minor League Stadium in the United States by Stadium Journey magazine. Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal called Fort Wayne one of the best cities for minor league sports. So whether you're taking a stroll in Foster Park, walking the galleries in the Museum of Art, or getting your inner rockstar on at Sweetwater, Fort Wayne is bound to have something for you.

YLNI Farmers Market

Young Leaders of Northeast Indiana (YLNI) is a nonprofit organization focused on attracting, developing and retaining emerging leaders. Each year, YLNI hosts a summer and winter farmers market, allowing local vendors to sell their products to the people of Fort Wayne. When the YLNI market originally started 16 years ago, they were hosting 4-6 vendors. Now, they host more than 150, with around 10,000 visitors per week. The market features live music, activities for kids, accessibility to local nonproit organizations, and of course, fresh produce from members of the community. The market is open on Saturdays beginning April 30th to November 5th, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Summer Market is located at the Barr Street Market, next to the History Center, on Berry Street and Barr Street. Free parking is available on the adjacent streets and in surrounding parking lots.

Electric Works

The Electric Works campus first opened in 1883. Early entrepreneurs were experimenting with electricity when the Fort Wayne Jenney Electric Light Company was founded by Ranald T. McDonald and James Jenney. Around the turn of the century, General Electric Co. acquired the business, allowing Fort Wayne's industrial power to rise. At its peak in 1944, the height of WWII, GE employed around a third of Fort Wayne's workforce. For more than eight decades, the campus churned out electric motors, electrical transformers, and other electronic components. After GE closed the facility entirely in 2015, the campus was bought in 2017 by RTM ventures, and they have since turned it into the Electric Works that we know today. To quote the Electric Works website, the Electric Works are "a lively district of innovation, energy and culture." The campus has now become a collage of restaurants and facilities dedicated to bring life back into the bones of the 140 year old buildings.

HE FORT

The Old Fort

Founded in 2004, Historic Fort Wayne, Inc. is a Non-Profit Organization that manages the Old Fort. Their goal is to educate the community about the Old Fort and its significance to the Old Northwest Territory, the State of Indiana, and the United States during the 17th and 18th centuries through interactive programming. They are a 100% volunteer organization. All of their events are free to the public. The Old Fort is a faithful copy of the post built by American troops under the command of Major John Whistler in 1815. It is reconstructed on a plot of ground less than a quarter of a mile from the original site. The Old Fort will be hosting several events and reenactments throughout the summer, the dates and times of which are posted on their website.

Three Rivers Festival

This year marks the 54th celebration of the Three Rivers Festival, Fort Wayne's annual nine-day summer festival. The Three Rivers Festival is a nonprofit organization, funded entirely by vendor participation fees, souvenir sales, refreshments and ticket sales, and the sponsorship and support of area businesses. The festival draws nearly half a million visitors from northeast Indiana, southern Michigan, and northwest Ohio, coming together to enjoy the entertainment, savor the food and catch up with old friends, all while making new friends and memories. This year's festival will take place from July 7-15, at Headwaters Park.

Concerts/Shows

-Kansas
-The Embassy Theatre - Jun 16
-Dave Mason
-Clyde Theatre - Jun 17
-Jerry Seinfeld
-The Embassy Theatre - Jun 22
-Doobie Brothers and Michael McDonald
-The Coliseum - Jun 23
-Kyle Kinane
-Parkview Field - Jun 23
-America
-Foellinger Theatre - Jul 10
-REO Speedwagon
-Foellinger Theatre - Sep 05

Container

Gardening as

written c
YEV

The Joys of Gardening

As the final frosts of winter pass, it's time to begin spring gardening. Gardening may sound like a mundane task that many old people indulge in, but it's truly an activity that brings lots of gratification. Caitlyn Heckman (10), a member of Homestead's Horticulture Club, mentioned that she gardens because it's "very relaxing" and she "enjoy[s] seeing plant growth." Stephen Meier (11) gardens for a similar reason, that gardening is a "peaceful and calming" activity. When the first flowers bloom or you reap your first harvest, it's a pretty fantastic feeling. Plus, according to The American Institute of Stress, gardening has been connected to decreased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Mason Weaver (11) explained how gardening "offers a simple distraction to everyday life."

IMAGE COURTESY OF LOVINGLY HOLDINGS

Strawberry plant
PICTURE COURTESY OF MADELYN EMRICK

Easiest Way to Begin Gardening

Container gardening is one of the best ways to begin gardening. Container gardening is the practice of growing plants in pots, instead of in the ground. Although the concept of an actual garden may be exciting, it's probably best to develop your skills with a gardening project that doesn't require tearing out a section of your backyard. Pots are a good option because they can be placed in convenient and tactful areas while avoiding the hassle of a fence to keep animals like Peter Rabbit and his friends from enjoying your vegetables. Container gardening also avoids excessive weeding and watering. Weaver (11) said that the main way to ensure a successful container garden is really just by "giv[ing] your plants a lot of attention."

Picking Containers

When it comes to container gardening, there are many different options for pots. Virtually anything that holds soil and has drainage holes works. Plastic containers are a popular choice. They can be reused and come in many shapes, sizes and colors. They are also inexpensive. Terracotta pots offer a lot of airflow but are typically heavier. Fabric pots are much lighter and usually have handles. In fact, many home-improvement stores, such as Lowes or Menards, offer pots designed specifically for container gardens. These types of pots tend to be large and shallow. You aren't limited to conventional pots only, though. Things like milk gallons, wooden barrels, old buckets, or tin cans can be used. All you have to do is pop some drainage holes in the bottom and voila, you have some repurposed, cheap pots.

Spider plant provided at Horticulture Club
PICTURE COURTESY OF CAITLYN HECKMAN

Gardening:
Spring Activity

lesigned by
RELAND

Arranging Plants

Usually, it's easiest to begin with starter plants, but for vegetables like radishes, carrots and beets you must start with seeds. It's important to acknowledge that some plants cross-pollinate because some vegetables will produce gnarly cross-products. I planted some hot peppers and bell peppers next to each other one year. The bell peppers turned out pretty disheveled looking and tasted awful. To avoid this, try and plant recommended vegetables and fruits together. For example, some plants that grow well in close proximity are tomatoes, basil and onions. Lettuce and herbs grow together well, along with beans, carrots and squash. Taller plants, like tomatoes and cucumbers, will need trellises for support. This leaves room for other, shorter plants, to thrive underneath.

Creating the Perfect Conditions

Although it may be tempting to just dig up dirt, stick it in the pot and plant the seeds, this can create unfavorable conditions for your plants. Especially with container gardens, which tend to accumulate excess water. Regular soil can cause root rot and become dense, making it hard for plant roots to grow. Instead, it's best to buy a soilless potting mixture that allows for optimal airflow and nutrients.

The best time to water your plants is early in the morning before the sun can begin to dry them out. Watering your plants at night introduces the possibility of disease caused by resting water. As a rule of thumb, Heckman (10) recommended about "1-2 inches of water per week" for the majority of plants. Normally, vegetables require watering about once a day, but if you're unsure, it is always good to double-check with online sources. Burpee.com provides multiple gardening 101 articles for beginners.

Best Plants for Your Garden

Barrel cucumbers are fantastic choices for container gardens. They can be easily culutivated from seeds or bought as starter plants. Not only do they create bountiful harvests, they are also highly resitant to disease. Cucumbers should be picked at about 5 inches long for the best flavor.

IMAGE COURTESY OF OLD WORLD GARDEN FARMS

Cherry tomatoes are another great option for gardens. Cherry tomato plants can be easily planted from a starter plant. With consistent watering, you can easily harvest way more tomatoes than you could possibly eat.

IMAGE COURTESY OF SOUTHERN LIVING

OLYMPUS ROBOTICS

written by
LILY RASSETTE
designed by Azalea Orsini

Homestead's robotics team, Olympus Robotics, wrapped up their competition season earlier this school year, finishing in the Quaterfinals at their Tippecanoe competition. Olympus saw large improvements in skill and experience compared to last season.

Olympus Robotics is an after-school club and program at Homestead in which a team of students creates a robot to fulfill a challenge issued by FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), an international youth organization that aims to encourage young people to pursue careers in STEM by issuing robotics challenges for students in elementary, middle, and high school to create impressive robots. Some past challenges include having the robots shoot baskets, climb monkey bars, and accurately launch frisbees. This year, the team was challenged to build a robot that could place cones and inflated cubes on shelves of various heights, and balance on a platform similar to a seesaw. After constructing these robots, teams take them to compete in competitions, with the potential to advance to a worldwide finals event.

Homestead's robotics team competes in FRC (FIRST Robotics Competition). For this competition, the team creates a large robot (usually more than three feet tall and 30 inches wide), to compete in a three versus three style competition, where the team with the most points wins. The team is run entirely by students through various sub-teams. Not only do the students design the entire robot, and then create all the parts and build it, but they also code the robot, wire the robot, acquire $20,000+ through sponsorships to fund the team and create fun posters, videos and media to promote the team and inspire others to pursue STEM. Weston Tilby, a new member of the robotics team, comments that his favorite part of participating this year was "contributing to the game as the human player." A "human player" is a member of the team that gets to help out robots on the competition field. Timothy Rowan, who has participated in the program throughout high school, comments that his favorite part about robotics is "working on a big project with a team, and building experience with design and engineering." Being on the robotics team is a great way to expand your skill set in engineering fields and strengthens critical thinking and problem solving.

If you're interested in engineering, mathematics, critical thinking or just contributing to the program, the robotics team holds a call-out meeting every fall, and they encourage everybody to check it out. Alternatively, you can email Mr. Elder or Dr. Klein for more information. Come ready to work hard and learn a lot!

MR. LENFESTEY GOES TO NASA

written and designed by
ISABELLA AMBROSE

Homestead physics teacher Mark Lenfestey was recently selected to join NASA's educator training experience, Astronomy Activation Ambassadors (AAA), along with 18 teachers from across the country.

NASA's AAA program originated as a program under NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) mission in 1997. This mission allowed educators to shadow scientists on their research flights and learn about the ways scientists collect their research. In 2016, the AAA program broke away from the SOFIA mission but was able to continue with its same surpose. Dr. Dana Backman, lead of the AAA program, states that "improving student STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) learning is the ultimate goal; we get there by training the teachers."

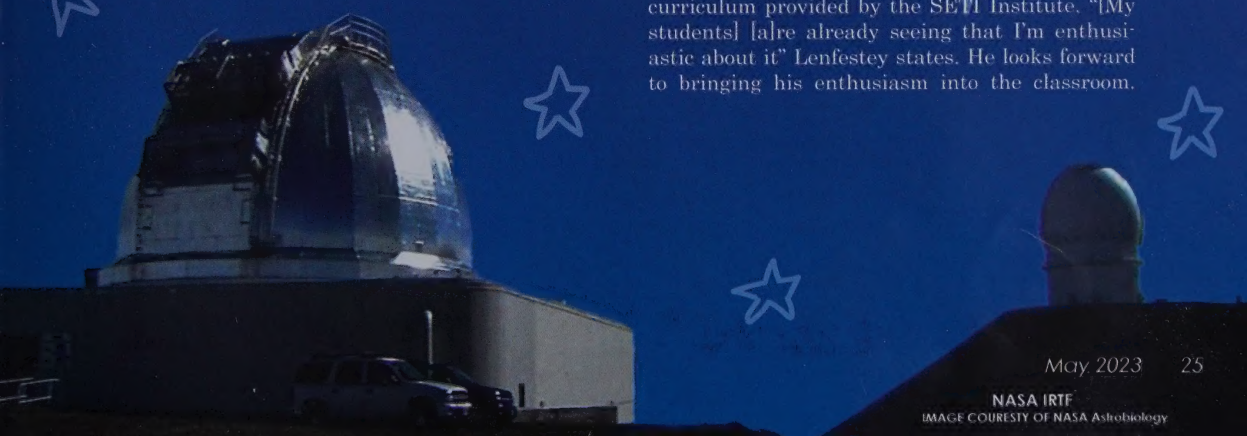
Lenfestey had to undergo a rigorous selection process to be chosen for the AAA program. "I had to apply and answer several different essay questions," says Lenfestey. These essay questions concerned his degrees, past NASA experiences, involvement in astronomy and teaching style. Former Ambassadors were responsible for choosing this year's Ambassadors. Luckily, Lenfestey passed their rigorous selection program.

The AAA program uses the curriculum provided by the SETI Institue, one of NASA's projects whose main purpose is to search for and understand life outside of our planet. The SETI Institute works with the AAA program to produce a curriculum that inspires STEM learning in the classroom by training educators in astrophysics and planetary science backed by NASA research. Included in the AAA program curriculum is a six month astronomy webinar course, an online college-level astronomy course, and an in-person workshop covering the SETI curriculum. Blackman states the final part of the program is a "STEM immersion experience involving guided and interactive visits to NASA astronomy research facilities," which is perhaps the most appealing aspect of program.

Mr. Lenfestey will travel to Mauna Kea, Hawai'i for the STEM immersion experience at NASA's Infrared Telescope Facility (IRTF). The IRTF is one of many telescopes at the Maunakea Observatories. Originally, NASA IRTF was built to support NASA's Voyager missions. The Voyager missions aimed to explore planets beyond our solar system, and while the Voyager mission continues, NASA IRTF now makes observations for astrobiology related research. AAA teachers will get hands-on experience at the IRTF facility with the help of NASA scientists, engineers, and technicians."During the pandemic, it felt like I was shut out from the activities I wanted to do," says Lenfestey. "Being hands-on and actually seeing the equipment and working with one another, it's nice to have that experience."

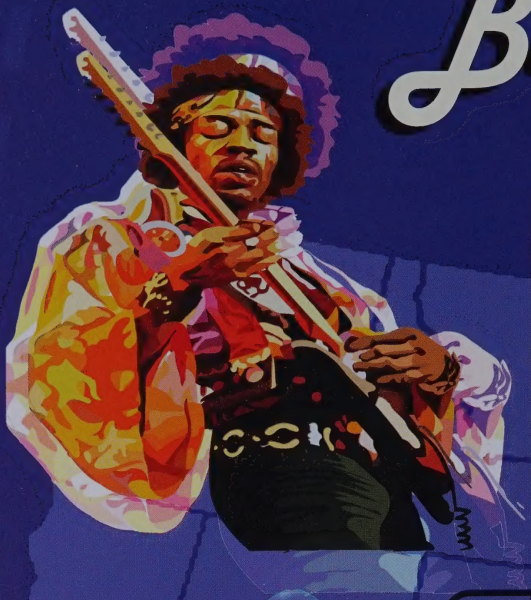
"I've always been interested in [astronomy], and I have questions that it's really hard to find other people to ask the questions of," Lenfestey states. He hopes that the AAA program will give him a place to connect with others to answer these questions.

Lenfestey's main goal is to integrate his new knowledge into his classes. Once he returns to the classroom, Lenfestey will teach the 10 hour curriculum provided by the SETI Institute. "[My students] [a]re already seeing that I'm enthusiastic about it" Lenfestey states. He looks forward to bringing his enthusiasm into the classroom.



NASA IRTF
IMAGE COURESTY OF NASA Astrobiology

Blues Acr



Jimi Hendrix – Seattle, WA

Jimi Hendrix is hailed as one of the greatest guitarists of all time, despite only a four year career. Hendrix was influenced by guitarists like B.B. King, Albert King, Muddy Waters, and Buddy Guy. Hendrix's music was influential in and of itself because it combined elements of blues, funk and rock and inspired artists like Stevie Ray Vaughan, John Mayer, and Kenny Wayne Shepherd.

Dave Alexander – Los Angeles, CA

Dave Alexander, also known as Omar Sharriff, was an American West Coast blues singer and pianist. He recorded for World Pacific in 1969 and for Arhoolie in 1971-1972. Personal tragedies then kept him from recording for almost two decades, but new recordings appeared in the 1990s on Arhoolie and Have Mercy.

Stevie Ray Vaughan – Dallas, TX

Born and raised in Dallas, Texas, Vaughan started playing guitar at the age of 7, inspired by his older brother Jimmie. Vaughan popularized the subgenre of Texas Blues, a heavier and more country oriented style of blues. After his death in 1990, Vaughan went on to be remembered as one of the greatest guitarists of all time.

ss the Nation

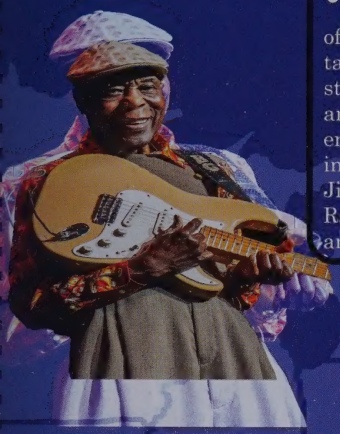
written and designed by
SAMUEL COLE

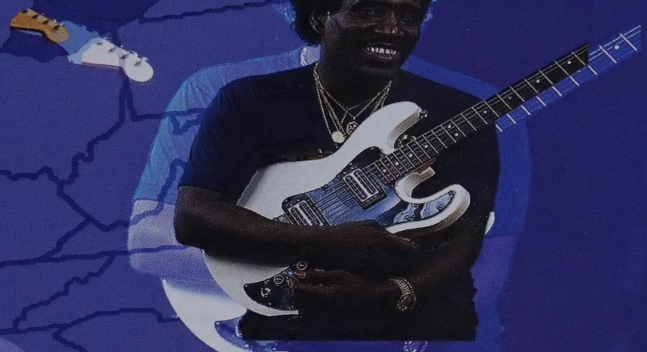
History

The Blues have long been a staple of American music, evolving from the unaccompanied vocal music and oral traditions of slaves imported from West Africa into a wide variety of styles and subgenres, eventually spanning across the U.S. The pure skill and "groove" of each musician are what landed them in this article, because without them, Blues wouldn't be the same as it is today.

Buddy Guy - Chicago, IL

Buddy Guy is an amazing example of true Chicago Blues. Chicago Blues takes elements from various early styles of Blues and combines them with an urban style. Buddy Guy has influenced several generations of guitarists including Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page, Keith Richards, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Jeff Beck, Gary Clark Jr. and John Mayer.





Johnny Copeland - New York, NY

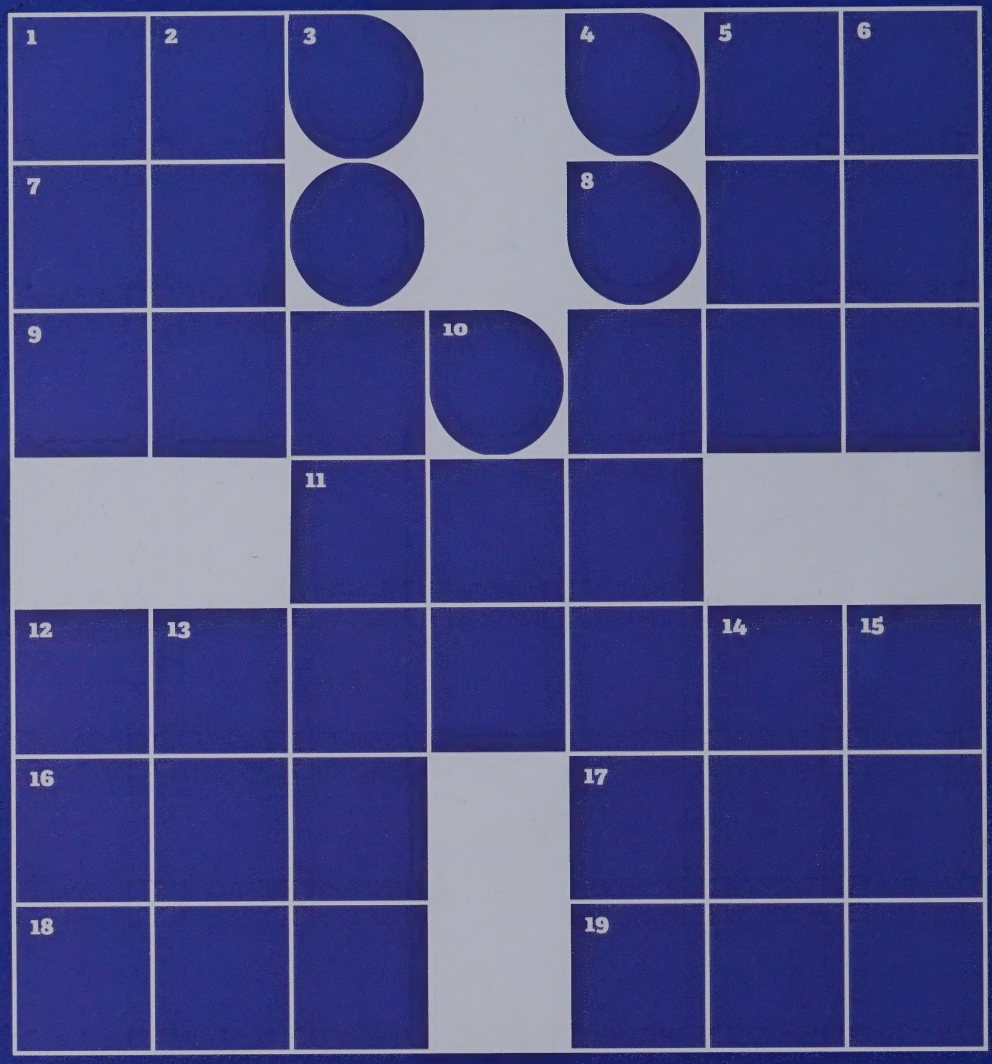
Johnny Copeland was an American Texas blues guitarist and singer. In 1983, he was named Blues Entertainer of the Year by the Blues Foundation. He is the father of Blues singer Shemekia Copeland and was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 2017 after his death.

Christone Ingram - Clarksdale, MS

Nicknamed "Kingfish," Christone Ingram is a rising blues star. His debut album "Kingfish" came out in 2019. Since then, Ingram has been called "the defining blues voice of his generation," his sound is a combination of contemporary Blues, Rock & Roll, R&B and Soul music.

Spartana Crossword

May 2023



Try to complete this month's crossword! The word that is spelled out in the bubbles will help you with one of the hints. Good luck!

Across:

1. Tech-nically named after a red fruit variant

4. To be done gently down the stream

7. ___lated; ___tope

8. Winnie The Pooh's wise friend

9. Masterful

11. Nothing, nada, none

12. Available on demand

16. ___shell white

17. Maiden name, in Wikipedia

18. "... a deer, a female deer."

19. Fantasy thriller series, when abbreviated an English word.

Down:

1. "Les ___" (shortened)

2. To question somebody

3. Could be silver, bronze, copper, or even gold!

4. _____ Stones

5. Be indebted to

6. ___ Hist.

10. A tupperware container's sidekick

12. A fiery example of the (bubbled) word

13. Can be inwardly bruised

14. Loyal and ambitious zodiac sign

15. "Miss me ___?"

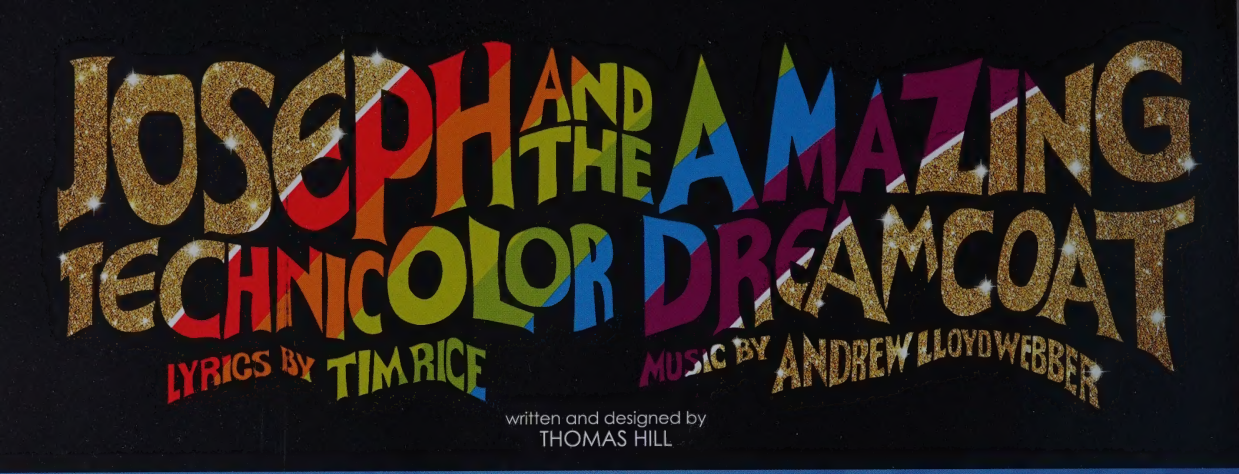
CLUES

PUZZLE

SSWORD

HINT

created by
NATHAN WISENER
designed by Azalea Orsini


JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT
LYRICS BY TIM RICE
MUSIC BY ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER
written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat is a 1968 musical based on the story of the coat of many colors from the Book of Genesis. Written by Tom Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, the well-known production has been performed across the country. The show is often selected for its simplicity and has been frequently performed by community theaters.

Curtis Shaw, the director of the spring musical, has been "performing for 40 years and directing for over 20 years," so he brings a vast amount of experience to the stage. He explained that the musical is chosen each year based on "talent" and "budget," among other factors. This year, the directors faced the challenge of construction in addition to typical challenges like "costuming, sound, and lighting." Because of construction, the directors were unsure "where [they] were going to have this production," which was "the big hurdle."

Joseph is led by a male cast, and this year, the title role is being played by freshman Josh Moody. Moody has been in "three productions so far, including the [Homestead] fall play, Audience." To prepare for his role, he said, "I have had to leave behind any shred of selflessness I had. Joseph is almost toxically confident. Despite his struggles, Joseph keeps his head held high (sometimes higher than he should)."

Jacob Litten (12) is playing Ruben, who is Joseph's "first and oldest brother." This is his first time "being an actor in a theater production." For Litten, preparing for the role included "listen[ing] to all the music Ruben is in and figur[ing] out what defines the character." Ruben is a "cowboy style singer," which plays into Litten's vocal preparations.

Potiphar's Wife is being played by junior Anna Ousley, who has "been in musical theatre since [she] was 11 and have been doing school shows and camps ever since." Her most recent role was Usherette in "Audience", Homestead's fall play. Because she has dance-heavy roles this year (she is also a featured dancer), preparation for Ousley has included "working hard on my artistry and dance ability."

As a featured dancer and the Baker, Elena Matyas (11) has been in several shows, including some at Homestead. "I was in the ensemble for Footloose my freshman year and I was Seitz in Newsies last year," Matays said. She added, "In middle school, I was Ursula in the Little Mermaid, Ladybug in James and the Giant Peach, and Maizie in Seussical." Matyas takes a step-by-step approach to her role: "When I first get the script, I look through it to find any songs and scenes that I am in and I become familiar with them. I watch a few videos of other productions online to understand the context, observing and learning from how other people play the role."

The musical has faced challenges this year. Moody said that the cast has "had to cancel and reschedule many of our planned rehearsals, which has definitely hindered our progress." However, Moody believes that the cast is talented and experienced enough to pull together. Matyas remarked that they "don't have the luxury of a ton of time between auditions and the show, so we have to learn choreography and vocals very quickly." Litten believed that the greatest problem facing the musical was "memorization," but reassured people that "it's all about practice."

Of course, the entire cast recommends that Homestead students come out and see the musical, which will be on May 11th and 12th. Ousley said the show has "a story many people are familiar with" but with "many different styles of music ranging from Reggae to Country and even a little bit of Elvis." Matyas added that the performance is "very high-energy and fun throughout the entire show." Moody put it succinctly, saying that "people should come and see Joseph because it's pure fun. There's no serious melodrama or moments that drag on. The whole show is loud and vibrant, on top of the wide variety of musical styles seen in the show." Litten added that he would escribe the musical as "over the top in the crazy funny factor."

Homestead has even enlisted the help of elementary schoolers from Covington Elementary to fill the role of the children's choir. Jaxon Crokhite, a fifth grader at Covington, who is playing Maui in their production of Moana Jr, said "I am so excited to be able to be in the high school musical and be a part of two musicals this year!" This is a unique opportunity for the district's younger students to be involved in a high school production. This spring, students should come on out and see the drama department and Covington students in action as they perform on May 11th and 12th!

THE WILLOW PROJECT

written by
KAITLYN FRY
designed by Azalea Orsini

On March 13th, President Joe Biden approved the Willow Project, an oil drilling plan that has met with mixed responses.

ConocoPhillips, Alaska's largest oil producer, proposed the Willow Project. The Willow Project will decrease the need for energy products from outside countries. It is estimated that the Willow Project will produce 180 thousand barrels of oil a day after it is fully built.

In 2020, former President Donald Trump approved the construction of five drill pads for ConocoPhillips, but President Joe Biden reduced this to three. Even with three drill pads, ConocoPhillips claims to be able to drill around 90% of the oil the company initially planned.

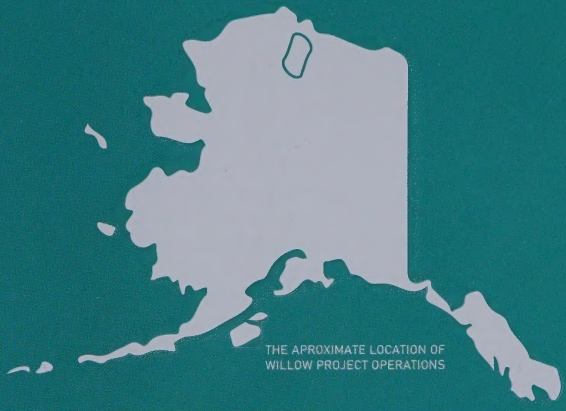
Earthjustice claims they will file a complaint against the project as a part of their efforts to stop the drilling. Earthjustice is an environmental group that uses legal recourse to advocate for a healthy environment for everyone.

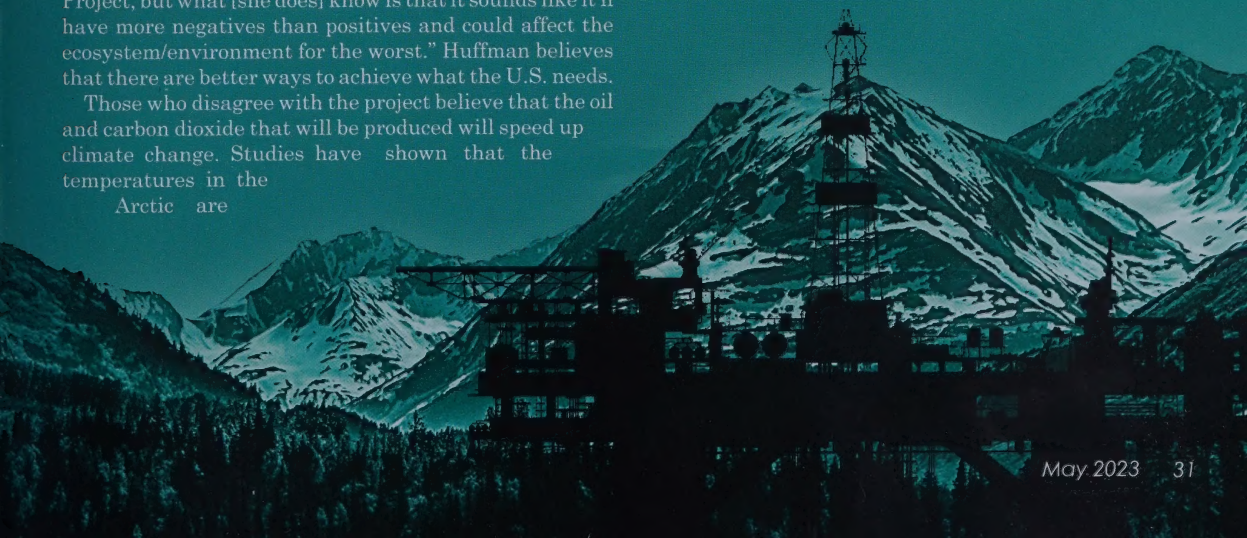
The construction for the project needs to be finished in winter because it needs the icy roads to finish building the structure. Alaska's winter weather usually ends in April. If they delay the project, it could take years until they are able to pump oil. Environmental groups are fighting time.

Some people support the project because it will create jobs, increase domestic energy production and decrease the need to source oil outside of the U.S. Over one in two Republicans believe that the positive effects of the project outweigh the adverse effects on the environment. Unlike Republicans, Democrats are less supportive of the project.

Rylie Huffman (10) "knows [little] about the Willow Project, but what [she does] know is that it sounds like it'll have more negatives than positives and could affect the ecosystem/environment for the worst." Huffman believes that there are better ways to achieve what the U.S. needs.

Those who disagree with the project believe that the oil and carbon dioxide that will be produced will speed up climate change. Studies have shown that the temperatures in the Arctic are increasing four times as fast as in the rest of the world. The permafrost is also thawing faster than the government had expected. Caitlyn Mallard (10) believes that the Willow Project will ruin the environment. Mallard claims that "the Willow Project is estimated to produce 270 million metric tons of carbon dioxide." Mallard states that Biden "promised to stop fossil fuel drilling on federal lands as a part of his 2020 campaign," but she believes he has not followed through with that promise. Government sources claim that they could not drastically reduce or fully refuse the project without legal backlash.





THE CULTURE OF COLORED HAIR

written and designed by
GAIA SPLENDORE

There's something to be said about semi-permanently changing your appearance. Maybe a bad break-up left you wanting to reinvent yourself, or perhaps a part of your identity can be found in a salon. Either way, altering how you look can be a powerful form of self expression. From new piercings, to tattoos, to hair dye, having the level of self-autonomy to edit your appearance is exciting and a useful tool in directing your own portrayal.

"I'm a very artistic person and I love bright colors and bold art; by incorporating my sense of aesthetics into my appearance, I feel like I'm really able to show who I am and what I love," said Ash Bushnell (11), a Homestead student who has pink and blue flowers incorporated into their buzzcut. Bushnell's spring inspired hair-dye design demonstrates the creativity that certain hairstyles allow.

Similarly, Meredith Loney (12), a student with a split dye with light blonde and dark ginger hair said that, "I love that my hair is an extension of myself and my personal style." Loney also said, "my hair has become an identifiable part of myself."

Because hair color is such a noticeable form of self expression, it naturally invites different reactions from different people. "Some older people have been slightly judgemental about it, like I get funny looks from old people sometimes, but I have also had a lot of old ladies compliment me on my hair," said Bushnell.

"So there really are not a lot of negative reactions; I experience just the odd stare every once in a while, but I generally think society as a whole is pretty accepting of dyed hair," said Bushnell.

Loney echoed this sentiment saying, "I cannot recall a time when I have been treated differently because of my hair and I almost always get compliments on it."

Society's viewpoint on unnatural hair colors in the workplace has been shifting toward more acceptance of less traditional colors of hair dye and viewing it as a form of creative expression rather than unprofessionalism. For instance, a survey conducted by Robert Half and the company Accountemps found that 34% of senior managers believe that having colored hair was problematic, but is now acceptable in a professional environment. On the other hand, only 23% of managers believe that it was and still is problematic. As younger people take on positions of authority and global viewpoints change, it seems that society as a whole is adapting to a more expressive generation. However, it is undeniable that there are some professional settings that have little to no tolerance for unnatural hair colors. For example, many government positions have restrictions on professional dress which include hair color. A survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers showed that 73% of employers considered a job candidate's unusual hair color when interviewing them.

While overall professional settings have become more lax when it comes to having dyed hair, whether or not it impacts your ability to get a job varies from position to position.

"The color of your hair isn't going to affect the quality of your work. [To a certain extent,] businesses should let their employees express themselves and realize that people's lives are not their jobs and they have the right to look however they want to," said Bushnell.

The Lavender Scare

"Being the first is hard sometimes, but you have to push things, and you have you have to establish your principles." – Frank Kameny

written and designed by
Hudson Mulhall

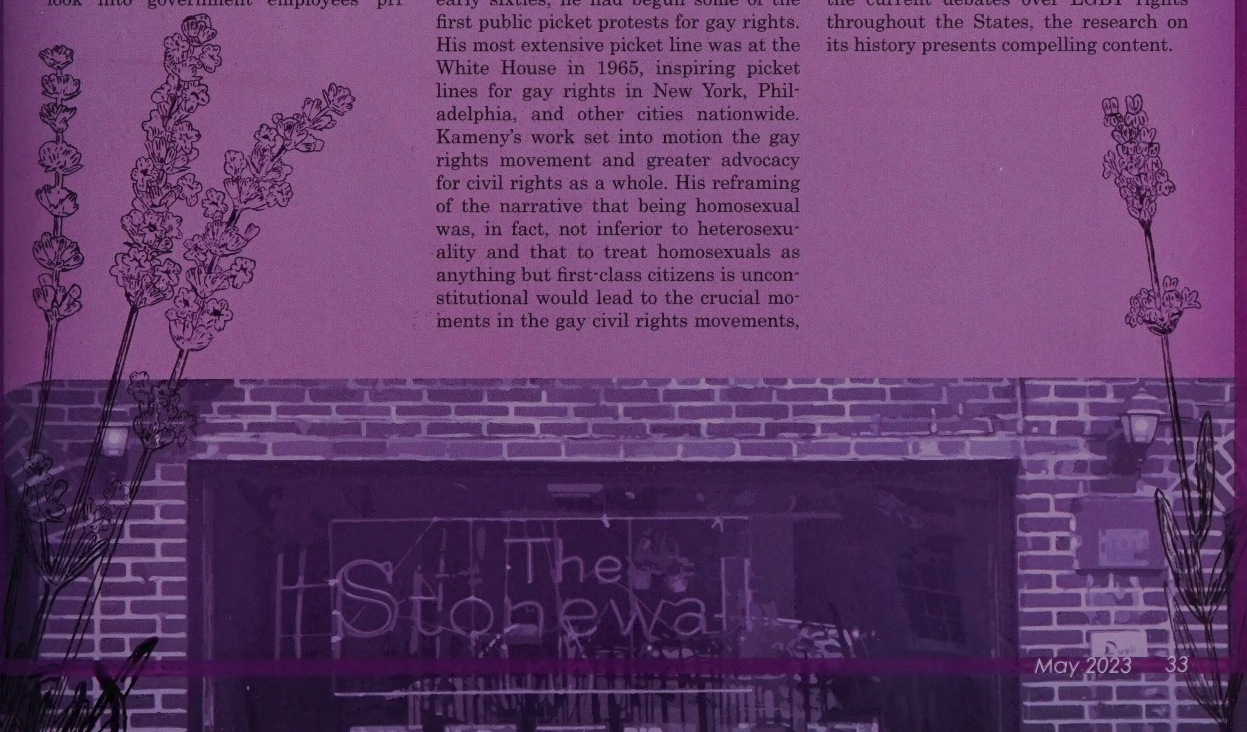
The Lavender Scare was a detrimental abridgment of the constitutional rights of gay people during the Cold War.

America in the 1950s was no stranger to tension. Coming out of WWII and right into the Cold War, the country's fear of impending communist takeover and nuclear war was constant in an era known as the Red Scare, an irrational fear that communists had infiltrated the United States government. In addition to this red fear, there was a second irrational fear: the Lavender Scare. Many McCarthy supporters (those who believed that communists had or were actively infiltrating the government) sought to oust LGBT members of the government because they were seen as being susceptible to blackmail.

The crux of this fear came on April 27, 1953, when President Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10450 into law. This order removed previous limitations on the FBI, expanding their ability to look into government employees' private lives without sufficient evidence. It banned gays and lesbians from working for the government or private contractors under the excuse that they caused "security risk" and, in many ways, began a "witch hunt." More than 5,000 people lost their jobs in the government alone. Even those in the private sector were not safe; the Lavender Scare sparked an uprising in homophobia across the US, similar to the fear of communism caused by the Red Scare, leading to many more losing their jobs.

One of the most important figures of this period was Frank Kameny. An astronomer with his Ph.D. from Harvard, Kameny worked briefly for the Army before being fired for his homosexuality. After being fired, he started the Mattachine Society of Washington, a gay rights activist group that initiated a new period of militancy in the homosexual rights movement compared to the relatively quiet groups of the early fifties. By the early sixties, he had begun some of the first public picket protests for gay rights. His most extensive picket line was at the White House in 1965, inspiring picket lines for gay rights in New York, Philadelphia, and other cities nationwide. Kameny's work set into motion the gay rights movement and greater advocacy for civil rights as a whole. His reframing of the narrative that being homosexual was, in fact, not inferior to heterosexuality and that to treat homosexuals as anything but first-class citizens is unconstitutional would lead to the crucial moments in the gay civil rights movements, including Stonewall and other gay rights riots and protests.

A legacy left behind by the Lavender Scare is the ongoing struggle for LGBT rights; only 23 states have enacted non-discrimination laws, for example. Despite this discrimination waning and waxing, Executive Order 10450 was in place for six decades. President Barack Obama eventually overturned this order at the end of his term. However, President Bill Clinton allowed gays and lesbians to hold security clearance by the nineties. Being educated in history helps develop a well-rounded understanding of many perspectives and the history behind them, which can help to avoid replicating the abridging of rights in America. However, we can be educated and well-rounded when it comes to what we can do as students. We should understand many perspectives, their history, and how to avoid replicating past abridging of rights and discrimination. Given the current debates over LGBT rights throughout the States, the research on its history presents compelling content.



SPRING CAL

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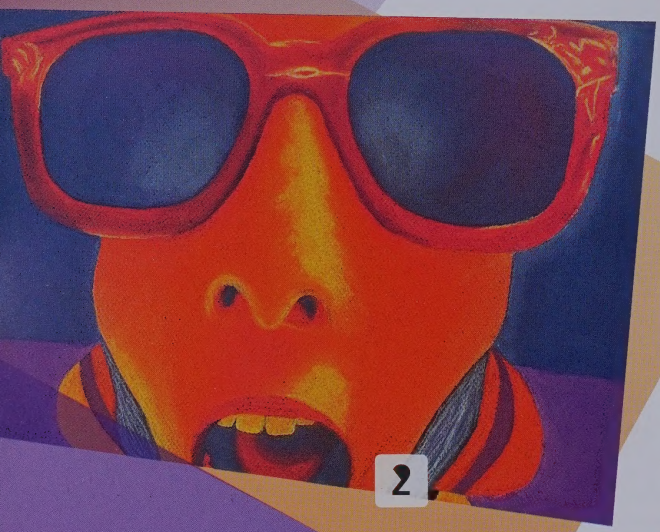
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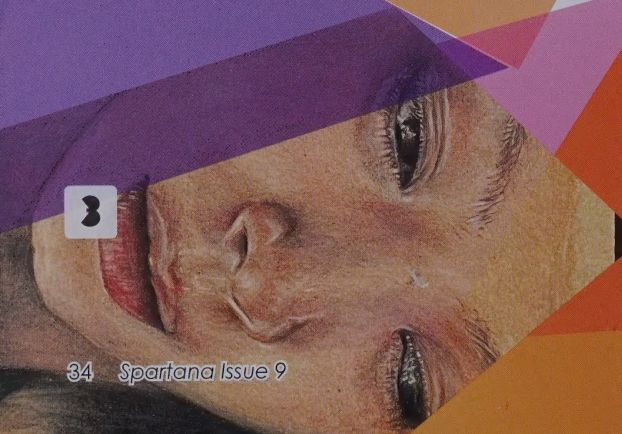
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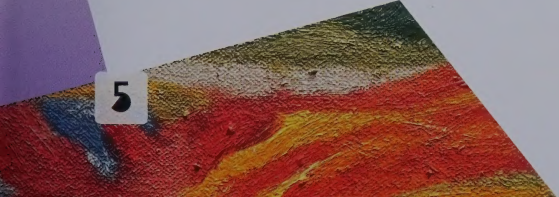
1. Lydia Pawlak
2. Gracie Rich, Principal's Choice Award
3. Alli Sullivan, Principal's Choice Award
4. Sami Shriner, Principal's Choice Award
5. Josie Clarke, Teacher's Choice Award
6. Nurul Tarma, Principal's Choice Award
7. Jasmine Barnes
8. Alicen Rorick
9. Tessa Bayless
10. Grace Kadziolka, Superintendent's Choice Award
11. Patricia Burgess, Teacher's Choice Award
12. Adriana Musi

PHOTOS BY MADELINE PHUONG


5

designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

Mulkticolored Musia!

written by
STELLA GRABLE
designed by Azalea Orsini

King Crimson

King Crimson was a defining band from the beginning of their career. Their 1969 debut album, "In The Court of the Crimson King," was nothing less than essential to the growth of progressive rock. It transcended the previous confinements of the genre, blending hard rock, jazz, avant-garde, and classical influences. With their larger-than-life vocal delivery combined with recklessly imagistic lyrics, King Crimson constantly sought to evolve their unique sound. The band split in 1974 but later returned with a new funky, polyrhythmic, new-wave sound, which was sustained for three '80s albums. This British band's unique sound is similar to that of Pink Floyd and Yes, establishing them as one of 'the big guys.'

Agent Orange

Agent Orange was the pioneering band of the surf-punk genre. Born out of Orange County California, this punk trio, started by lead guitarist and vocalist Mike Palm in 1979, was the first to combine Beach Boys-esque surfer rock with the aggressive underground punk of the '80s. Their debut album, "Living in the Darkness," became the anthem of underground skater-punk. While their sound was juvenile at this point, they refined it throughout their career, while still, amazingly, holding true to their intense voice. Akin to the music of Adolescents and The Misfits, Agent Orange is a baseline band for modern punk.

Blondie

Formed in 1974 by singer Debbie Harry and guitarist Chris Stein, Blondie is an American rock band that combined genres such as reggae and hip-hop into the new-wave sound of the '80s. Beginning their career in New York punk clubs, this band was considered to be underground until their 1978 album release of "Parallel Lines." From this album came mainstream hits such as "Picture This" and "Heart of Glass." The group was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2006.

The Zombies

The Zombies, known for hits such as "Time of the Season," and "She's Not There," were formed in 1962. In the early era of Beatlemania, this similarly British band encompassed pop and psychedelic rock almost five years before The Beatles transitioned into their hypnotic sound. Perennially undermentioned, The Zombies became a sensation of the '60s and '70s. In 2019 they were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Additionally, their 1968 album, "Odessey and Oracle," made both the 2003 and 2020 Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Albums List.

Bobby "Blue" Bland

Born Robert Calvin Bland, Bobby "Blue" Bland was an American rhythm and blues singer from the '50s. Known best for his captivating baritone voice and sensual style, Bland accumulated 63 single hits on the R&B charts. Born in Tennessee, Bland began his career with other well-known artists like B.B. King and Jonny Ace. What set him apart was his alternation between smooth, meticulously arranged pieces, and fiercely shouted gospel-style ones, although these came later in his career. The preliminary portion of his career was characterized by rough-around-the-edges Texas blues. Bland was given a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1997.

Indigo De Souza

With a dissonant sound revolving around excruciatingly raw and emotional lyrics, Indigo De Souza makes this list as an unlikely candidate. The the only contemporary artist on this list, Souza released her first startling EP in 2016. Immediately captivating listeners with her indie tracks that were recorded in a friend's garage, Souza put herself on the radar. Her song "Hold U" appeared in the Top 40 of Billboard's Adult Alternative Airplay chart. This skyrocketed her to the level of similar-sounding artists such as Pheobe Bridgers, Soccer Mommy, and Car Seat Headrest.

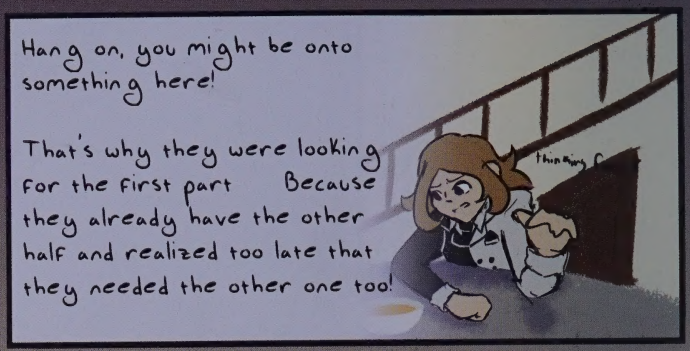
Deep Purple

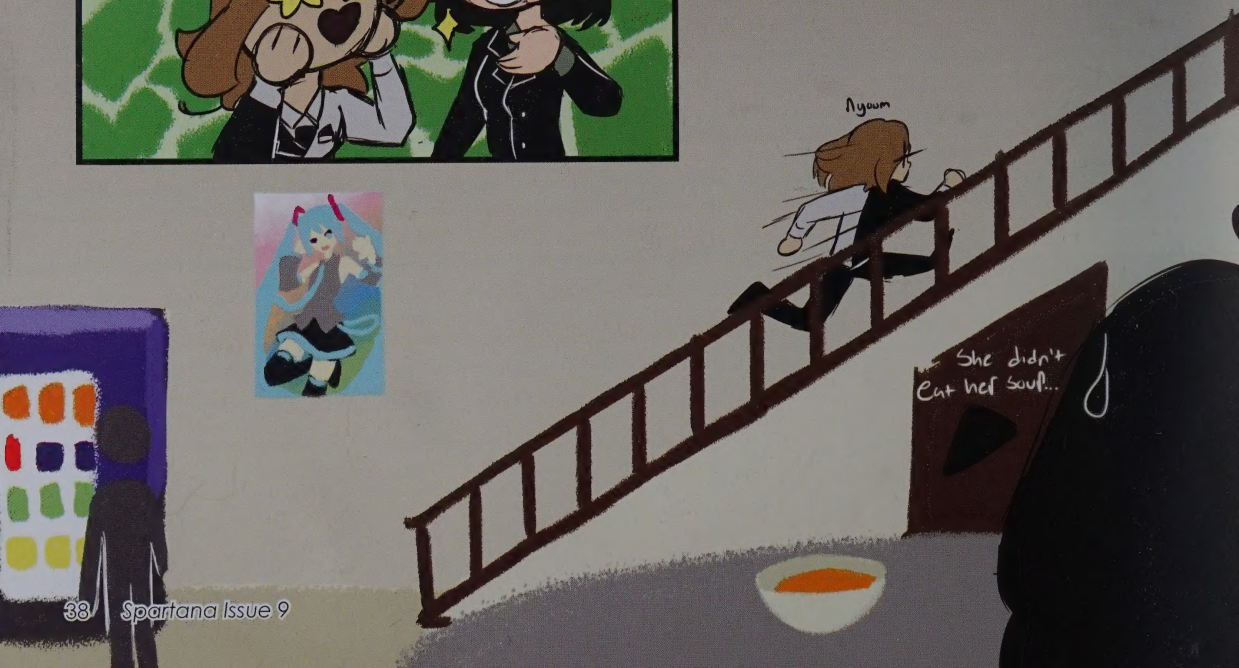
An indisputable classic rock essential, Deep Purple defined hard rock and early metal. With elements of psychedelic pop akin to Led Zeppelin, combined with heavy licks of Cream-style blues rock, Deep Purple combines everything you could ask for in a classic rock band. What truly set them apart was the inclusion of Jon Lord, the band's composer and organist. Deep Purple's use of the organ and composition was radical for the time, and their instrumentation pushed the boundaries of classic rock. With the famous track of "Smoke on the Water," Deep Purple is forever engrained in '70s rock history.

Agent Domino

Issue Five

Designed by CLAIRE HOUSER
Written by GRACE HENSLEY


Hang on, you might be onto something here!
That's why they were looking for the first part Because they already have the other half and realized too late that they needed the other one too!
thinking



SLAM!
QUENTIN
Gah!
don't scare me like that...
I think I know where the other piece is!
You do?
yeah, but you're not gonna like it
So proud
Don't say it
Inferna
Sigh
I know it's going to be dangerous, but I think I coul
Domino.
neak in if I have the right tools, and, of course, proper he
Agent Domino!
...but if I have the right gear, it might even be eas
Lyra!
lost in Thought
Figured that would get your attention
I'll send the mission request to Felix for approval
Smug

This issue blue me away!
Indi-go read more at hhsspartana.com.